MARK TWAIN

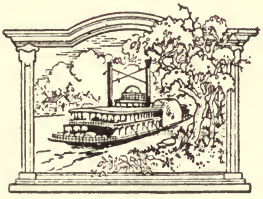
A BIOGRAPHY

THE PERSONAL AND LITERARY LIFE OF SAMUEL LANGHORNE CLEMENS

BY

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

IN FOUR VOLUMES—VOL. III



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MARK TWAIN
A BIOGRAPHY

CLIX

THE LIFE OF THE POPE

AS Mark Twain in the earlier days of his marriage had temporarily put aside authorship to join in a newspaper venture, so now again literature had dropped into the background, had become an avocation, while financial interests prevailed. There were two chief ventures—the business of Charles L. Webster & Co. and the promotion of the Paige type-setting machine. They were closely identified in fortunes, so closely that in time the very existence of each depended upon the success of the other; yet they were quite distinct, and must be so treated in this story.

The success of the Grant Life had given the Webster business an immense prestige. It was no longer necessary to seek desirable features for publication. They came uninvited. Other war generals preparing their memoirs naturally hoped to appear with their great commander. *McClellan's Own Story* was arranged for without difficulty. *A Genesis of the Civil War*, by Gen. Samuel Wylie Crawford, was offered and accepted. General Sheridan's *Memoirs* were in preparation, and negotiations with Webster & Co. for their appearance were not delayed. Probably neither Webster nor Clemens believed that the sale of any of these books would approach those of the Grant Life, but they expected them to be large, for the Grant book had stimulated the public taste for war literature, and anything bearing the stamp of personal battle experience was considered literary legal-tender.

Moreover, these features, and even the Grant book itself, seemed likely to dwindle in importance by the side of *The Life of Pope Leo XIII.*, who in his old and enfeebled age had consented to the preparation of a memoir, to be published with his sanction and blessing.[1] Clemens and Webster—every one, in fact, who heard of the project—united in the belief that no book, with the exception of the Holy Scripture itself or the Koran, would have a wider acceptance than the biography of the Pope. It was agreed by good judges—and they included Howells and Twichell and even the shrewd general agents throughout the country—that every good Catholic would regard such a book not only as desirable, but as absolutely necessary to his salvation. Howells, recalling Clemens's emotions of this time, writes:

> He had no words in which to paint the magnificence of the project or to forecast its colossal success. It would have a currency bounded only by the number of Catholics in Christendom. It would be translated into every language which was anywhere written or printed; it would be circulated literally in every country of the globe.

The formal contract for this great undertaking was signed in Rome in April, 1886, and Webster immediately prepared to go over to consult with his Holiness in person as to certain details, also, no doubt, for the newspaper advertising which must result from such an interview.

It was decided to carry a handsome present to the Pope in the form of a specially made edition of the Grant *Memoirs* in a rich casket, and it was Clemens's idea that the binding of the book should be solid gold—this to be done by Tiffany at an estimated cost of about three thousand dollars. In the end, however, the binding was

[1] By Bernard O'Reilly, D.D., LL.D. "Written with the Encouragement, Approbation, and Blessings of His Holiness the Pope."

not gold, but the handsomest that could be designed of less precious and more appropriate materials.

Webster sailed toward the end of June, and was warmly received and highly honored in Rome. The great figures of the Grant success had astonished Europe even more than America, where spectacular achievements were more common. That any single publication should pay a profit to author and publisher of six hundred thousand dollars was a thing which belonged with the wonders of Aladdin's garden. It was natural, therefore, that Webster, who had rubbed the magic lamp with this result, who was Mark Twain's partner, and who had now traveled across the seas to confer with the Pope himself, should be received with royal honors. In letters written at the time, Webster relates how he found it necessary to have an imposing carriage and a footman to maintain the dignity of his mission, and how, after various impressive formalities, he was granted a private audience, a very special honor indeed. Webster's letter gives us a picture of his Holiness which is worth preserving.

We[1] found ourselves in a room perhaps twenty-five by thirty-five feet; the furniture was gilt, upholstered in light-red silk, and the side-walls were hung with the same material. Against the wall by which we entered and in the middle space was a large gilt throne chair, upholstered in red plush, and upon it sat a man bowed with age; his hair was silvery white and as pure as the driven snow. His head was partly covered with a white skull-cap; he was dressed in a long white cassock which reached to his feet, which rested upon a red-plush cushion and were inclosed in red embroidered slippers with a design of a cross. A golden chain was about his neck and suspended by it in his lap was a gold cross set in precious stones. Upon a finger of his right hand was a gold ring with an emerald setting nearly an

[1] Mrs. Webster, who, the reader will remember, was Annie Moffett, a daughter of Pamela Clemens, was included in the invitation to the Presence Chamber.

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LIFE OF POPE LEO XIII.

From an Authentic Memoir Furnished by His Order.

WRITTEN WITH THE ENCOURAGEMENT, APPROBATION, AND BLESSING OF

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BY BERNARD O'REILLY, D.D., L.D. (LAVAL)

ELEGANTLY AND PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

EVERY CATHOLIC IN THE LAND SHOULD POSSESS THIS VOLUME, AS IT IS ISSUED WITH THE APPROBATION AND BLESSING OF THE POPE, AS A SOUVENIR OF HIS GOLDEN JUBILEE YEAR, 1887

LEO XIII. ON HIS THRONE IN HIS PRIVATE AUDIENCE-ROOM.

TWO MAGNIFICENT CHROMOS PRINTED IN TEN COLORS.

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WEBSTER & CO.'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE "LIFE OF THE POPE"

inch in diameter. His countenance was smiling, and beamed with benevolence. His face at once impressed us as that of a noble, pure man who could not do otherwise than good.

This was the Pope of Rome, and as we advanced, making the three genuflexions prescribed by etiquette, he smiled benignly upon us. We advanced and, kneeling at his feet, kissed the seal upon his ring. He took us each by the hand repeatedly during the audience and made us perfectly at our ease.

They remained as much as half an hour in the Presence; and the Pope conversed on a variety of subjects, including the business failure of General Grant, his last hours, and the great success of his book. The figures seemed to him hardly credible, and when Webster assured him that already a guaranteed sale of one hundred thousand copies of his own biography had been pledged by the agents he seemed even more astonished.

"We in Italy cannot comprehend such things," he said. "I know you do great work in America; I know you have done a great and noble work in regard to General Grant's book, but that my Life should have such a sale seems impossible."

He asked about their home, their children, and was in every way the kindly, gentle-hearted man that his pictured face has shown him. Then he gave them his final blessing and the audience closed.

We each again kissed the seal on his ring. As Annie was about to kiss it he suddenly withdrew his hand and said, "And will you, a little Protestant, kiss the Pope's ring?" As he said this, his face was all smiles, and mischief was clearly delineated upon it. He immediately put back his hand and she kissed the ring. We now withdrew, backing out and making three genuflexions as before. Just as we reached the door he called to Dr. O'Reilly, "Now don't praise me too much; tell the truth, tell the truth."

CLX

A GREAT PUBLISHER AT HOME

MEN are likely to be spoiled by prosperity, to be made arrogant, even harsh. Success made Samuel Clemens merely elate, more kindly, more humanly generous. Every day almost he wrote to Webster, suggesting some new book or venture, but always considerately, always deferring to suggestions from other points of view. Once, when it seemed to him that matters were not going as well as usual, a visit from Webster showed him that it was because of his own continued absence from the business that he did not understand. Whereupon he wrote:

DEAR CHARLEY,—Good—it's all good news. Everything is on the pleasantest possible basis now, and is going to stay so. I blame myself in not looking in on you oftener in the past—that would have prevented all trouble. I mean to stand to my duty better now.

At another time, realizing the press of responsibility, and that Webster was not entirely well, he sent a warning from Mrs. Clemens against overwork. He added:

Your letter shows that you need such a warning. So I warn you myself to look after that. Overwork killed Mr. Langdon and it can kill you.

Clemens found his own cares greatly multiplied. His connection with the firm was widely known, and many authors sent him their manuscripts or wrote him personal letters concerning them. Furthermore, he was beset by

all the cranks and beggars in Christendom. His affairs became so numerous at length that he employed a business agent, F. G. Whitmore, to relieve him of a part of his burden. Whitmore lived close by, and was a good billiard-player. Almost anything from the morning mail served as an excuse to send for Whitmore.

Clemens was fond of affairs when they were going well; he liked the game of business, especially when it was pretentious and showily prosperous. It is probable that he was never more satisfied with his share of fortune than just at this time. Certainly his home life was never happier. Katie Leary, for thirty years in the family service, has set down some impressions of that pleasant period.

Mr. Clemens was a very affectionate father. He seldom left the house at night, but would read to the family, first to the children until bedtime, afterward to Mrs. Clemens. He usually read Browning to her. They were very fond of it. The children played charades a great deal, and he was wonderful at that game and always helped them. They were very fond of private theatricals. Every Saturday of their lives thay had a temporary stage put up in the school-room and we all had to help. Gerhardt painted the scenery. They frequently played the balcony scene from "Romeo and Juliet" and several plays they wrote themselves. Now and then we had a big general performance of "The Prince and the Pauper." That would be in the library and the dining-room with the folding-doors open. The place just held eighty-four chairs, and the stage was placed back against the conservatory. The children were crazy about acting and we all enjoyed it as much as they did, especially Mr. Clemens, who was the best actor of all. I had a part, too, and George. I have never known a happier household than theirs was during those years.

Mr. Clemens spent most of his time up in the billiard-room, writing or playing billiards. One day when I went in, and he was shooting the balls around the tables, I noticed smoke coming up from the hearth. I called Patrick, and John O'Neill, the

gardener, and we began taking up the hearth to see what was the matter. Mr. Clemens kept on playing billiards right along and paid no attention to what we were doing. Finally, when we got the hearth up, a lot of flame and smoke came out into the room. The house was on fire. Mr. Clemens noticed then what we were about, and went over to the corner where there were some bottle fire-extinguishers. He took one down and threw it into the flames. This put them out a good deal, and he took up his cue, went back to the table, and began to shoot the balls around again as if nothing had happened. Mrs. Clemens came in just then and said, "Why, the house is afire!"

"Yes, I know it," he said, but went on playing.

We had a telephone and it didn't work very well. It annoyed him a good deal and sometimes he'd say:

"I'll tear it out."

One day he tried to call up Mrs. Dr. Tafft. He could not hear plainly and thought he was talking to central. "Send down and take this d—— thing out of here," he said; "I'm tired of it." He was mad, and using a good deal of bad language. All at once he heard Mrs. Dr. Tafft say, "Oh, Mr. Clemens, good morning." He said, "Why, Mrs. Tafft, I have just come to the telephone. George, our butler, was here before me and I heard him swearing as I came up. I shall have to talk to him about it."

Mrs. Tafft often told it on him.[1]

Mrs. Clemens, before I went there, took care of his desk, but little by little I began to look after it when she was busy at other things. Finally I took care of it altogether, but he didn't know it for a long time. One morning he caught me at it. "What are you doing here?" he asked.

"Dusting, Mr. Clemens," I said.

"You have no business here," he said, very mad.

"I've been doing it for a year, Mr. Clemens," I said. "Mrs. Clemens told me to do it."

[1] Mark Twain once wrote to the telephone management: "The time is coming very soon when the telephone will be a perfect instrument, when proximity will no longer be a hindrance to its performance, when, in fact, one will hear a man who is in the next block just as easily and comfortably as he would if that man were in San Francisco."

Report

for the week ending .

of the condition of the telephone

at 351 Farmington Avenue

Hartford, Conn

Explanation of the Signs.

\+ Artillery can be heard.

++ Thunder can be heard.

+++ Artillery & thunder combined can be heard

++++ All combinations fail

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.	A.M.
P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.	P.M.

Remarks.

CHART DESIGNED BY MARK TWAIN TO RECORD TELEPHONE TROUBLES

After that, when he missed anything—and he missed things often—he would ring for me. "Katie," he would say, "you have lost that manuscript."

"Oh, Mr. Clemens," I would say, "I am sure I didn't touch it."

"Yes, you did touch it, Katie. You put it in the fire. It is gone."

He would scold then, and fume a great deal. Then he would go over and mark out with his toe on the carpet a line which I was never to cross. "Katie," he would say, "you are never to go nearer to my desk than that line. That is the dead-line." Often after he had scolded me in the morning he would come in in the evening where I was dressing Mrs. Clemens to go out and say, "Katie, I found that manuscript." And I would say, "Mr. Clemens, I felt so bad this morning that I wanted to go away."

He had a pipe-cleaner which he kept on a high shelf. It was an awful old dirty one, and I didn't know that he ever used it. I took it to the balcony which was built out into the woods and threw it away as far as I could throw it. Next day he asked, "Katie, did you see my pipe-cleaner? You did see it; I can tell by your looks."

I said, "Yes, Mr. Clemens, I threw it away."

"Well," he said, "it was worth a thousand dollars," and it seemed so to me, too, before he got done scolding about it.

It is hard not to dwell too long on the home life of this period. One would like to make a long chapter out of those play-acting evenings alone. They remained always fresh in Mark Twain's memory. Once he wrote of them:

We dined as we could, probably with a neighbor, and by quarter to eight in the evening the hickory fire in the hall was pouring a sheet of flame up the chimney, the house was in a drench of gas-light from the ground floor up, the guests were arriving, and there was a babble of hearty greetings, with not a voice in it that was not old and familiar and affectionate; and when the curtain went up we looked out from the stage upon none but faces that were dear to us, none but faces that were lit up with welcome for us.

CLXI

HISTORY: MAINLY BY SUSY

SUSY, in her biography, which she continued through this period, writes:

> Mama and I have both been very much troubled of late because papa, since he had been publishing General Grant's books, has seemed to forget his own books and works entirely; and the other evening, as papa and I were promonading up and down the library, he told me that he didn't expect to write but one more book, and then he was ready to give up work altogether, die, or do anything; he said that he had written more than he had ever expected to, and the only book that he had been pertickularly anxious to write was one locked up in the safe downstairs, not yet published.

The book locked in the safe was *Captain Stormfield*, and the one he expected to write was *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.* He had already worked at it in a desultory way during the early months of 1886, and once wrote of it to Webster:

> I have begun a book whose scene is laid far back in the twilight of tradition; I have saturated myself with the atmosphere of the day and the subject and got myself into the swing of the work. If I peg away for some weeks without a break I am safe.

But he could not peg away. He had too many irons in the fire for that. Matthew Arnold had criticized General Grant's English, and Clemens immediately put down other things to rush to his hero's defense. He

pointed out that in Arnold's criticism there were no less than "two grammatical crimes and more than several examples of very crude and slovenly English," and said:

> There is that about the sun which makes us forget his spots, and when we think of General Grant our pulses quicken and his grammar vanishes; we only remember that this is the simple soldier, who, all untaught of the silken phrase-makers, linked words together with an art surpassing the art of the schools, and put into them a something which will still bring to American ears, as long as America shall last, the roll of his vanished drums and the tread of his marching hosts.[1]

Clemens worked at the *Yankee* now and then, and Howells, when some of the chapters were read to him, gave it warm approval and urged its continuance.

Howells was often in Hartford at this time. Webster & Co. were planning to publish *The Library of Humor*, which Howells and "Charley" Clark had edited several years before, and occasional conferences were desirable. Howells tells us that, after he and Clark had been at great trouble to get the matter logically and chronologically arranged, Clemens pulled it all to pieces and threw it together helter-skelter, declaring that there ought to be no sequence in a book of that sort, any more than in the average reader's mind; and Howells admits that this was probably the truer method in a book made for the diversion rather than the instruction of the reader.

One of the literary diversions of this time was a commentary on a delicious little book by Caroline B. Le Row —*English as She Is Taught*—being a compilation of genuine answers given to examination questions by pupils in our public schools. Mark Twain was amused by such definitions as: "Aborigines—a system of mountains"; "Alias—a good man in the Bible"; "Ammonia—the food of the gods," and so on down the alphabet.

[1] Address to Army and Navy Club. For full text see Appendix Q, last volume.

Susy, in her biography, mentions that her father at this time read to them a little article which he had just written, entitled "Luck," and that they thought it very good. It was a story which Twichell had heard and told to Clemens, who set it down about as it came to him. It was supposed to be true, yet Clemens seemed to think it too improbable for literature and laid it away for a number of years. We shall hear of it again by and by.

From Susy's memoranda we gather that humanity at this time was to be healed of all evils and sorrows through "mind cure":

Papa has been very much interested of late in the "mind-cure" theory. And, in fact, so have we all. A young lady in town has worked wonders by using the "mind cure" upon people; she is constantly busy now curing peoples' diseases in this way—and curing her own, even, which to me seems the most remarkable of all.

A little while past papa was delighted with the knowledge of what he thought the best way of curing a cold, which was by starving it. This starving did work beautifully, and freed him from a great many severe colds. Now he says it wasn't the starving that helped his colds, but the trust in the starving, the "mind cure" connected with the starving.

I shouldn't wonder if we finally became firm believers in "mind cure." The next time papa has a cold I haven't a doubt he will send for Miss Holden, the young lady who is doctoring in the "mind-cure" theory, to cure him of it.

Again, a month later, she writes:

April 19, 1886. Yes, the "mind cure" *does* seem to be working wonderfully. Papa, who has been using glasses now for more than a year, has laid them off entirely. And my near-sightedness is really getting better. It seems marvelous. When Jean has stomack-ache Clara and I have tried to divert her by telling her to lie on her side and try "mind cure." The novelty of it has made her willing to try it, and then Clara

and I would exclaim about how wonderful it was she was getting better. And she would think it realy was finally, and stop crying, to our delight.

The other day mama went into the library and found her lying on the sofa with her back toward the door. She said, "Why, Jean, what's the matter? Don't you feel well?" Jean said that she had a little stomack-ache, and so thought she would lie down. Mama said, "Why don't you try 'mind cure'?" "I am," Jean answered.

Howells and Twichell were invited to try the "mind cure," as were all other friends who happened along. To the end of his days Clemens would always have some panacea to offer to allay human distress. It was a good trait, when all is said, for it had its root in his humanity. The "mind cure" did not provide all the substance of things hoped for, though he always allowed for it a wide efficacy. Once, in later years, commenting on Susy's record, he said:

The mind cannot heal broken bones, and doubtless there are many other physical ills which it cannot heal, but it can greatly help to modify the severities of all of them without exception, and there are mental and nervous ailments which it can wholly heal without the help of physician or surgeon.

Susy records another burning interest of this time:

Clara sprained her ankle a little while ago by running into a tree when coasting, and while she was unable to walk with it she played solotaire with cards a great deal. While Clara was sick and papa saw her play solotaire so much he got very much interested in the game, and finally began to play it himself a little; then Jean took it up, and at last *mama* even played it occasionally; Jean's and papa's love for it rapidly increased, and now Jean brings the cards every night to the table and papa and mama help her play, and before dinner is at an end papa has gotten a separate pack of cards and is playing alone, with great interest. Mama and Clara next are made subject

to the contagious solotaire, and there are four solotarireans at the table, while you hear nothing but "Fill up the place," etc. It is dreadful!

But a little further along Susy presents her chief subject more seriously. He is not altogether absorbed with "mind cure" and solitaire, or even with making humorous tales.

Papa has done a great deal in his life I think that is good and very remarkable, but I think if he had had the advantages with which he could have developed the gifts which he has made no use of in writing his books, or in any other way, for peoples' pleasure and benefit outside of his own family and intimate friends, he could have done *more* than he has, and a great deal more, even. He is known to the public as a humorist, but he has much more in him that is earnest than that is humorous. He has a keen sense of the ludicrous, notices funny stories and incidents, knows how to tell them, to improve upon them, and does not forget them.

And again:

When we are all alone at home nine times out of ten he talks about some very earnest subject (with an occasional joke thrown in), and he a good deal more often talks upon such subjects than upon the other kind.

He is as much of a philosopher as anything, I think. I think he could have done a great deal in this direction if he had studied while young, for he seems to enjoy reasoning out things, no matter what; in a great many such directions he has greater ability than in the gifts which have made him famous.

It was with the keen eyes and just mind of childhood that Susy estimated, and there is little to add to her valuation.

Susy's biography came to an end that summer after starting to record a visit which they all made to Keokuk to see Grandma Clemens. They went by way of the Lakes and down the Mississippi from St. Paul. A pleas-

ant incident happened that first evening on the river. Soon after nightfall they entered a shoal crossing. Clemens, standing alone on the hurricane-deck, heard the big bell forward boom out the call for leads. Then came the leadsman's long-drawn chant, once so familiar, the monotonous repeating in river parlance of the depths of water. Presently the lead had found that depth of water signified by his *nom de plume* and the call of "Mark Twain, Mark Twain" floated up to him like a summons from the past. All at once a little figure came running down the deck, and Clara confronted him, reprovingly:

"Papa," she said, "I have hunted all over the boat for you. Don't you know they are calling for you?"

They remained in Keokuk a week, and Susy starts to tell something of their visit there. She begins:

"We have arrived in Keokuk after a very pleasant—"

The sentence remains unfinished. We cannot know what was the interruption or what new interest kept her from her task. We can only regret that the loving little hand did not continue its pleasant history. Years later, when Susy had passed from among the things we know, her father, commenting, said:

> When I look at the arrested sentence that ends the little book it seems as if the hand that traced it cannot be far—it is gone for a moment only, and will come again and finish it. But that is a dream; a creature of the heart, not of the mind—a feeling, a longing, not a mental product; the same that lured Aaron Burr, old, gray, forlorn, forsaken, to the pier day after day, week after week, there to stand in the gloom and the chill of the dawn, gazing seaward through veiling mists and sleet and snow for the ship which he knew was gone down, the ship that bore all his treasure—his daughter.

CLXII

BROWNING, MEREDITH, AND MEISTERSCHAFT

THE Browning readings must have begun about this time. Just what kindled Mark Twain's interest in the poetry of Robert Browning is not remembered, but very likely his earlier associations with the poet had something to do with it. Whatever the beginning, we find him, during the winter of 1886 and 1887, studiously, even violently, interested in Browning's verses, entertaining a sort of club or class who gathered to hear his rich, sympathetic, and luminous reading of the *Parleyings*—"With Bernard de Mandeville," "Daniel Bartoli," or "Christopher Smart." Members of the Saturday Morning Club were among his listeners and others—friends of the family. They were rather remarkable gatherings, and no one of that group but always vividly remembered the marvelously clear insight which Mark Twain's vocal personality gave to those somewhat obscure measures. They did not all of them realize that before reading a poem he studied it line by line, even word by word; dug out its last syllable of meaning, so far as lay within human possibility, and indicated with pencil every shade of emphasis which would help to reveal the poet's purpose. No student of Browning ever more devoutly persisted in trying to compass a master's intent—in such poems as "Sordello," for instance—than Mark Twain. Just what permanent benefit he received from this particular passion it is difficult to know. Once, at a class-meeting, after finishing "Easter Day," he made a remark which the class requested him

to "write down." It is recorded on the fly-leaf of *Dramatis Personæ* as follows:

> One's glimpses & confusions, as one reads Browning, remind me of looking through a telescope (the small sort which you must move with your hand, not clock-work). You toil across dark spaces which are (to *your* lens) empty; but every now & then a splendor of stars & suns bursts upon you and fills the whole field with flame. Feb. 23, 1887.

In another note he speaks of the "vague dim flash of splendid humming-birds through a fog." Whatever mental treasures he may or may not have laid up from Browning there was assuredly a deep gratification in the discovery of those splendors of "stars and suns" and the flashing "humming-birds," as there must also have been in pointing out those wonders to the little circle of devout listeners. It all seemed so worth while.

It was at a time when George Meredith was a reigning literary favorite. There was a Meredith cult as distinct as that of Browning. Possibly it exists to-day, but, if so, it is less militant. Mrs. Clemens and her associates were caught in the Meredith movement and read *Diana of the Crossways* and the *Egoist* with reverential appreciation.

The Meredith epidemic did not touch Mark Twain. He read but few novels at most, and, skilful as was the artistry of the English favorite, he found his characters artificialities—ingeniously contrived puppets rather than human beings, and, on the whole, overrated by their creator. *Diana of the Crossways* was read aloud, and, listening now and then, he was likely to say:

"It doesn't seem to me that Diana lives up to her reputation. The author keeps telling us how smart she is, how brilliant, but I never seem to hear her say anything smart or brilliant. Read me some of Diana's smart utterances."

He was relentless enough in his criticism of a literature

he did not care for, and he never learned to care for Meredith.

He read his favorite books over and over with an ever-changing point of view. He re-read Carlyle's *French Revolution* during the summer at the farm, and to Howells he wrote:

How stunning are the changes which age makes in man while he sleeps! When I finished Carlyle's *French Revolution* in 1871 I was a Girondin; every time I have read it since I have read it differently—being influenced & changed, little by little, by life & environment (& Taine & St. Simon); & now I lay the book down once more, & recognize that I am a Sansculotte!—And not a pale, characterless Sansculotte, but a Marat. Carlyle teaches no such gospel, so the change is in *me*—in my vision of the evidences.

People pretend that the Bible means the same to them at 50 that it did at all former milestones in their journey. I wonder how they can lie so. It comes of practice, no doubt. They would not say that of Dickens's or Scott's books. *Nothing* remains the same. When a man goes back to look at the house of his childhood it has always *shrunk;* there is no instance of such house being as big as the picture in memory & imagination call for. Shrunk how? Why, to its correct dimensions; the house hasn't altered; this is the first time it has been in focus.

Well, that's loss. To have house & Bible shrink so, under the disillusioning corrected angle, is loss—for a moment. But there are compensations. You tilt the tube skyward & bring planets & comets & corona flames a hundred & fifty thousand miles high into the field. Which I see you have done, & found Tolstoi. I haven't got him in focus yet, but I've got Browning.

In time the Browning passion would wane and pass, and the club was succeeded by, or perhaps it blended with, a German class which met at regular intervals at the Clemens home to study "*der, die,* and *das*" and the "*gehabt habens*" out of Meisterschaft and such other text-books as Professor Schleutter could provide. They had monthly

conversation days, when they discussed in German all sorts of things, real and imaginary. Once Dr. Root, a prominent member, and Clemens had a long wrangle over painting a house, in which they impersonated two German neighbors.

Clemens finally wrote for the class a three-act play—"Meisterschaft"—a literary achievement for which he was especially qualified, with its picturesque mixture of German and English and its unfailing humor. It seems unlike anything ever attempted before or since. No one but Mark Twain could have written it. It was given twice by the class with enormous success, and in modified form it was published in the *Century Magazine* (January, 1888). It is included to-day in his "Complete Works," but one must have a fair knowledge of German to capture the full delight of it.[1]

Mark Twain probably exaggerated his sentiments a good deal when in the Carlyle letter he claimed to be the most rabid of Sansculottes. It is unlikely that he was ever very bare-kneed and crimson in his anarchy. He believed always that cruelty should be swiftly punished, whether in king or commoner, and that tyrants should be destroyed. He was for the people as against kings, and for the union of labor as opposed to the union of capital, though he wrote of such matters judicially—not radically. The Knights of Labor organization, then very powerful, seemed to Clemens the salvation of oppressed humanity. He wrote a vehement and convincing paper on the subject, which he sent to Howells, to whom it appealed very strongly, for Howells was socialistic, in a sense, and Clemens made his appeal in the best and largest sense,

[1] On the original manuscript Mark Twain wrote: "There is some tolerably rancid German here and there in this piece. It is attributable to the proof-reader."

Perhaps the proof-reader resented this and cut it out, for it does not appear as published.

dramatizing his conception in a picture that was to include, in one grand league, labor of whatever form, and, in the end, all mankind in a final millennium. Howells wrote that he had read the essay "with thrills amounting to yells of satisfaction, and declared it to be the best thing yet said on the subject. The essay closed:

> He [the unionized workman] is here and he will remain. He is the greatest birth of the greatest age the nations of the world have known. You cannot sneer at him—that time has gone by. He has before him the most righteous work that was ever given into the hand of man to do; and he will do it. Yes, he is here; and the question is not—as it has been heretofore during a thousand ages—What shall we do with him? For the first time in history we are relieved of the necessity of managing his affairs for him. He is not a broken dam this time—he is the Flood!

It must have been about this time that Clemens developed an intense, even if a less permanent, interest in another matter which was to benefit the species. He was one day walking up Fifth Avenue when he noticed the sign:

PROFESSOR LOISETTE

SCHOOL OF MEMORY

The Instantaneous Art of Never Forgetting

Clemens went inside. When he came out he had all of Professor Loisette's literature on "predicating correlation," and for the next several days was steeping himself in an infusion of meaningless words and figures and sentences and forms, which he must learn backward and forward and diagonally, so that he could repeat them awake and asleep in order to predicate his correlation to a point where remembering the ordinary facts of life, such as names, addresses, and telephone numbers, would be a mere diversion.

It was another case of learning the multitudinous details of the Mississippi River in order to do the apparently simple thing of steering a boat from New Orleans to St. Louis, and it is fair to say that, for the time he gave it, he achieved a like success. He was so enthusiastic over this new remedy for human distress that within a very brief time he was sending out a printed letter recommending Loisette to the public at large. Here is an extract:

. . . I had no SYSTEM—and some sort of rational order of procedure is, of course, necessary to success in any study. Well, Loisette furnished me a system. I cannot undertake to say it is the best, or the worst, because I don't know what the other systems are.

Loisette, among other cruelties, requires you to memorize a great long string of words that haven't any apparent connection or meaning—there are perhaps 500 of these words, arranged in maniacal lines of 6 to 8 or 9 words in each line—71 lines in all. Of course your first impulse is to resign, but at the end of three or four hours you find to your surprise that you've GOT them and can deliver them backward or forward without mistake or hesitation. Now, don't you see what a world of confidence that must necessarily breed?—confidence in a memory which before you wouldn't even venture to trust with the Latin motto of the U. S. lest it mislay it and the country suffer.

Loisette doesn't make memories, he furnishes confidence in memories that already exist. Isn't that valuable? Indeed it is to me. Whenever hereafter I shall choose to pack away a thing properly in that refrigerator I sha'n't be bothered with the aforetime doubts; I shall know I'm going to find it sound and sweet when I go for it again.

Loisette naturally made the most of this advertising and flooded the public with Mark Twain testimonials. But presently Clemens decided that after all the system was not sufficiently simple to benefit the race at large. He recalled his printed letters and prevailed upon Loisette to suppress his circulars. Later he decided that the whole system was a humbug.

CLXIII

A LETTER TO THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND

IT was one day in 1887 that Clemens received evidence that his reputation as a successful author and publisher—a man of wealth and revenues—had penetrated even the dimness of the British Tax Offices. A formidable envelope came, inclosing a letter from his London publishers and a very large printed document all about the income tax which the Queen's officers had levied upon his English royalties as the result of a report that he had taken Buckenham Hall, Norwich, for a year, and was to become an English resident. The matter amused and interested him. To Chatto & Windus he wrote:

I will explain that all that about Buckenham Hall was an English newspaper's mistake. I was not in England, and if I had been I wouldn't have been at Buckenham Hall anyway, but Buckingham Palace, or I would have endeavored to have found out the reason why. . . .

But we won't resist. We'll pay as if I were really a resident. The country that allows me copyright has a right to tax me.

Reflecting on the matter, Clemens decided to make literature of it. He conceived the notion of writing an open letter to the Queen in the character of a rambling, garrulous, but well-disposed countryman whose idea was that her Majesty conducted all the business of the empire herself. He began:

HARTFORD, *November 6, 1887.*

MADAM,—You will remember that last May Mr. Edward Bright, the clerk of the Inland Revenue Office, wrote me about

a tax which he said was due from me to the Government on books of mine published in London—that is to say, an income tax on the royalties. I do not know Mr. Bright, and it is embarrassing to me to correspond with strangers, for I was raised in the country and have always lived there, the early part in Marion County, Missouri, before the war, and this part in Hartford County, Connecticut, near Bloomfield and about 8 miles this side of Farmington, though some call it 9, which it is impossible to be, for I have walked it many and many a time in considerably under three hours, and General Hawley says he has done it in two and a quarter, which is not likely; so it has seemed best that I write your Majesty.

The letter proceeded to explain that he had never met her Majesty personally, but that he once met her son, the Prince of Wales, in Oxford Street, at the head of a procession, while he himself was on the top of an omnibus. He thought the Prince would probably remember him on account of a gray coat with flap pockets which he wore, he being the only person on the omnibus who had on that kind of a coat.

"I remember *him*," he said, "as easily as I would a comet."

He explained the difficulty he had in understanding under what heading he was taxed. There was a foot-note on the list which stated that he was taxed under "Schedule D, section 14." He had turned to that place and found these three things: "Trades, Offices, Gas Works." He did not regard authorship as a trade, and he had no office, so he did not consider that he was taxable under "Schedule D, section 14." The letter concludes:

Having thus shown your Majesty that I am not taxable, but am the victim of the error of a clerk who mistakes the nature of my commerce, it only remains for me to beg that you will, of your justice, annul my letter that I spoke of, so that my publisher can keep back that tax money which, in the confusion and aberration caused by the Document, I ordered him to pay.

You will not miss the sum, but this is a hard year for authors, and as for lectures I do not suppose your Majesty ever saw such a dull season.

With always great and ever-increasing respect, I beg to sign myself your Majesty's servant to command,

MARK TWAIN.

Her Majesty the Queen, London.

The letter, or "petition," as it was called, was published in the *Harper's Magazine* "Drawer" (December, 1887), and is now included in the "Complete Works." Taken as a whole it is one of the most exquisite of Mark Twain's minor humors. What other humorist could have refrained from hinting, at least, the inference suggested by the obvious "Gas Works"? Yet it was a subtler art to let his old, simple-minded countryman ignore that detail. The little skit was widely copied and reached the Queen herself in due time, and her son, Prince Edward, who never forgot its humor.

Clemens read a notable paper that year before the Monday Evening Club. Its subject was "Consistency"—political consistency—and in it he took occasion to express himself pretty vigorously regarding the virtue of loyalty to party before principle, as exemplified in the Blaine-Cleveland campaign. It was in effect a scathing reply to those who, three years before, had denounced Twichell and himself for standing by their convictions.[1]

[1] Characteristic paragraphs from this paper will be found under Appendix R, at the end of last volume.

CLXIV

SOME FURTHER ACCOUNT OF CHARLES L. WEBSTER & CO.

FLOOD-TIDE is a temporary condition, and the ebb in the business of Charles L. Webster & Co., though very deliberate, was not delayed in its beginning. Most of the books published—the early ones at least—were profitable. McClellan's memoirs paid, as did others of the war series.

Even *The Life of Pope Leo XIII.* paid. What a statement to make, after all their magnificent dreams and preparations! It was published simultaneously in six languages. It was exploited in every conceivable fashion, and its aggregate sales fell far short of the number which the general agents had promised for their first orders. It was amazing, it was incredible, but, alas! it was true. The prospective Catholic purchaser had decided that the Pope's *Life* was not necessary to his salvation or even to his entertainment. Howells explains it, to his own satisfaction at least, when he says:

> We did not consider how often Catholics could not read, how often, when they could, they might not wish to read. The event proved that, whether they could read or not, the immeasurable majority did not wish to read *The Life of the Pope*, though it was written by a dignitary of the Church and issued to the world with sanction from the Vatican.

Howells, of course, is referring to the laboring Catholic of that day. There are no Catholics of this day—no American Catholics, at least—who do not read, and money

among them has become plentiful. Perhaps had the Pope's *Life* been issued in this new hour of enlightenment the tale of its success might have been less sadly told.

A variety of books followed. Henry Ward Beecher agreed to write an autobiography, but he died just when he was beginning the work, and the biography, which his family put together, brought only a moderate return. A book of Sandwich Islands tales and legends, by his Hawaiian Majesty King Kalakaua, edited by Clemens's old friend, Rollin M. Daggett, who had become United States minister to the islands, barely paid for the cost of manufacture, while a volume of reminiscences by General Hancock was still less fortunate. The running expenses of the business were heavy. On the strength of the Grant success Webster had moved into still larger quarters at No. 3 East Fifteenth Street, and had a ground floor for a salesroom. The force had become numerous and costly. It was necessary that a book should pay largely to maintain this pretentious establishment. A number of books were published at a heavy loss. Never mind their titles; we may forget them, with the name of the bookkeeper who presently embezzled thirty thousand dollars of the firm's money and returned but a trifling sum.

By the end of 1887 there were three works in prospect on which great hopes were founded—*The Library of Humor*, which Howells and Clark had edited; a personal memoir of General Sheridan's, and a *Library of American Literature* in ten volumes, compiled by Edmund Clarence Stedman and Ellen Mackay Hutchinson. It was believed these would restore the fortunes and the prestige of the firm. They were all excellent, attractive features. *The Library of Humor* was ably selected and contained two hundred choice drawings by Kemble. The Sheridan *Memoir* was finely written, and the public interest in it was bound to be general. *The Library of American Literature* was a collection of the best American writing,

and seemed bound to appeal to every American reading-home. It was necessary to borrow most of the money required to build these books, for the profit made from the Grant Life and less fortunate ventures was pretty well exhausted. Clemens presently found a little drift of his notes accumulating at this bank and that—a disturbing condition, when he remembered it, for he was financing the type-setting machine by this time, and it was costing a pretty sum.

Meantime, Webster was no longer active in the management. In two years he had broken down from overwork, and was now desperately ill with an acute neuralgia that kept him away from the business most of the time. Its burdens had fallen upon his assistant, Fred J. Hall, a willing, capable young man, persevering and hopeful, lacking only years and experience. Hall worked like a beaver, and continually looked forward to success. He explained, with each month's report of affairs, just why the business had not prospered more during that particular month, and just why its profits would be greater during the next. Webster finally retired from the business altogether, and Hall was given a small partnership in the firm. He reduced expenses, worked desperately, pumping out the debts, and managed to keep the craft afloat.

The Library of Humor, the Life of Sheridan, and *The Library of American Literature* all sold very well; not so well as had been hoped, but the sales yielded a fair profit. It was thought that if Clemens himself would furnish a new book now and then the business might regain something of its original standing.

We may believe that Clemens had not been always patient, not always gentle, during this process of decline. He had differed with Webster, and occasionally had gone down and reconstructed things after his own notions. Once he wrote to Orion that he had suddenly awakened

to find that there was no more system in the office than in a nursery without a nurse.

"But," he added, "I have spent a good deal of time there since, and reduced everything to exact order and system."

Just what were the new features of order instituted it would be interesting to know. That the financial pressure was beginning to be felt even in the Clemens home is shown by a Christmas letter to Mrs. Moffett.

HARTFORD, *December 18, 1887.*

DEAR PAMELA,—Will you take this $15 & buy some candy or other trifle for yourself & Sam & his wife to remind you that we remember you?

If we weren't a little crowded this year by the type-setter I'd send a check large enough to buy a family Bible or some other useful thing like that. However, we go on & on, but the type-setter goes on forever—at $3,000 a month; which is much more satisfactory than was the case the first 17 months, when the bill only averaged $2,000, & promised to take a thousand years. We'll be through now in 3 or 4 months, I reckon, & then the strain will let up and we can breathe freely once more, whether success ensues or failure.

Even with a type-setter on hand we ought not to be in the least scrimped—but it would take a long letter to explain why & who is to blame.

All the family send love to all of you, & best Christmas wishes for your prosperity.

Affectionately,

SAM.

CLXV

LETTERS, VISITS, AND VISITORS

THERE were many pleasanter things, to be sure. The farm life never failed with each returning summer; the winters brought gay company and fair occasions. Sir Henry and Lady Stanley, visiting America, were entertained in the Clemens home, and Clemens went on to Boston to introduce Stanley to his lecture audience. Charles Dickens's son, with his wife and daughter, followed a little later. An incident of their visit seems rather amusing now. There is a custom in England which requires the host to give the guest notice of bedtime by handing him a lighted candle. Mrs. Clemens knew of this custom, but did not have the courage to follow it in her own home, and the guests knew of no other way to relieve the situation; as a result, all sat up much later than usual. Eventually Clemens himself suggested that possibly the guests would like to retire.

Robert Louis Stevenson came down from Saranac, and Clemens went in to visit him at his New York hotel, the St. Stevens, on East Eleventh Street. Stevenson had orders to sit in the sunshine as much as possible, and during the few days of their association he and Clemens would walk down to Washington Square and sit on one of the benches and talk. They discussed many things—philosophies, people, books; it seems a pity their talk could not have been preserved.

Stevenson was a great admirer of Mark Twain's work. He said that during a recent painting of his portrait he had

insisted on reading *Huck Finn* aloud to the artist, a Frenchman, who had at first protested, and finally had fallen a complete victim to Huck's yarn. In one of Stevenson's letters to Clemens he wrote:

> My father, an old man, has been prevailed upon to read *Roughing It* (his usual amusement being found in theology), and after one evening spent with the book he declared: "I am frightened. It cannot be safe for a man at my time of life to laugh so much."

What heaps of letters, by the way, remain from this time, and how curious some of them are! Many of them are requests of one sort or another, chiefly for money—one woman asking for a single day's income, conservatively estimated at five thousand dollars. Clemens seldom answered an unwarranted letter; but at one time he began a series of unmailed answers—that is to say, answers in which he had let himself go merely to relieve his feelings and to restore his spiritual balance. He prepared an introduction for this series. In it he said:

> . . . You receive a letter. You read it. It will be tolerably sure to produce one of three results: 1, pleasure; 2, displeasure; 3, indifference. I do not need to say anything about Nos. 1 & 3; everybody knows what to do with those breeds of letters; it is breed No. 2 that I am after. It is the one that is loaded up with trouble.
>
> When you get an exasperating letter what happens? If you are young you answer it promptly, instantly—and mail the thing you have written. At forty what do you do? By that time you have found out that a letter written in a passion is a mistake in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred; that it usually wrongs two persons, and *always* wrongs one—yourself. You have grown weary of wronging yourself and repenting; so you manacle, you fetter, you log-chain the frantic impulse to write a pulverizing answer. You will wait a day or die. But in the mean time what do you *do?* Why, if it is about dinner-time, you sit at table in a deep abstraction all through the meal; you

try to throw it off and help do the talking; you get a start three or four times, but conversation dies on your lips every time—your mind isn't on it; your heart isn't in it. You give up, and subside into a bottomless deep of silence, permanently; people must speak to you two or three times to get your attention, and then say it over again to make you understand. This kind of thing goes on all the rest of the evening; nobody can interest you in anything; you are useless, a depressing influence, a burden. You go to bed at last; but at three in the morning you are as wide awake as you were in the beginning. Thus we see what you have been doing for nine hours—on the outside. But what were you doing on the inside? You were *writing letters*—in your mind. And enjoying it, that is quite true; that is not to be denied. You have been flaying your correspondent alive with your incorporeal pen; you have been braining him, disemboweling him, carving him into little bits, and then—doing it all over again. For nine hours.

It was wasted time, for you had no intention of putting any of this insanity on paper and mailing it. Yes, you know that, and confess it—but what were you to do? Where was your remedy? Will anybody contend that a man can say to such masterful anger as that, Go, and be obeyed?

No, he cannot; that is certainly true. Well, then, what is he to do? I will explain by the suggestion contained in my opening paragraph. During the nine hours he has written as many as forty-seven furious letters—in his mind. If he had put just *one* of them on paper it would have brought him relief, saved him eight hours of trouble, and given him an hour's red-hot pleasure besides.

He is not to *mail* this letter; he understands that, and so he can turn on the whole volume of his wrath; there is no harm. He is only writing it to get the bile out. So to speak, he is a volcano: imaging himself erupting does no good; he must open up his crater and pour out in reality his intolerable charge of lava if he would get relief.

Before he has filled his first sheet sometimes the relief is there. He degenerates into good-nature from that point.

Sometimes the load is so hot and so great that one writes as many as three letters before he gets down to a mailable one; a very angry one, a less angry one, and an argumentative one

with hot embers in it here and there. He pigeonholes these and then does one of two things—dismisses the whole matter from his mind or writes the proper sort of letter and mails it.

To this day I lose my balance and send an overwarm letter —or more frequently telegram—two or three times a year. But that is better than doing it a hundred times a year, as I used to do years ago. Perhaps I write about as many as ever, but I pigeonhole them. They ought not to be thrown away. Such a letter a year or so old is as good as a sermon to the man who wrote it. It makes him feel small and shabby, but—well, that wears off. Any sermon does; but the sermon does some little good, anyway. An old cold letter like that makes you wonder how you could ever have got into such a rage about nothing.

The unmailed answers that were to accompany this introduction were plentiful enough and generally of a fervent sort. One specimen will suffice. It was written to the chairman of a hospital committee.

Dear Sir,—If I were Smithfield I would certainly go out and get behind something and blush. According to your report, "the politicians are afraid to tax the people for the support" of so humane and necessary a thing as a hospital. And do your "people" propose to stand that?—at the hands of vermin officials whom the breath of their votes could blow out of official existence in a moment if they had the pluck to band themselves together and blow. Oh, come, these are not "people"—they are cowed school-boys with backbones made of boiled macaroni. If you are not misreporting those "people" you are just in the right business passing the mendicant hat for them. Dear sir, communities where anything like citizenship exists are accustomed to hide their shames, but here we have one proposing to get up a great "exposition" of its dishonor and advertise it all it can.

It has been eleven years since I wrote anything for one of those graveyards called a "Fair paper," and so I have doubtless lost the knack of it somewhat; still I have done the best I could for you.

This was from a burning heart and well deserved. One may almost regret that he did not send it.

Once he received a letter intended for one Samuel Clements, of Elma, New York, announcing that the said Clements's pension had been allowed. But this was amusing. When Clemens had forwarded the notice to its proper destination he could not resist sending this comment to the commissioner at Washington:

DEAR SIR,—I have not applied for a pension. I have often wanted a pension—often—ever so often—I may say, but inasmuch as the only military service I performed during the war was in the Confederate army, I have always felt a delicacy about asking you for it. However, since you have suggested the thing yourself, I feel strengthened. I haven't any very pensionable diseases myself, but I can furnish a substitute—a man who is just simply a chaos, a museum of all the different kinds of aches and pains, fractures, dislocations and malformations there are; a man who would regard "rheumatism and sore eyes" as mere recreation and refreshment after the serious occupations of his day. If you grant me the pension, dear sir, please hand it to General Jos. Hawley, United States Senator—I mean hand him the certificate, not the money, and he will forward it to me. You will observe by this postal-card which I inclose that he takes a friendly interest in the matter. He thinks I've already got the pension, whereas I've only got the rheumatism; but didn't want that—I had that before. I wish it were catching. I know a man that I would load up with it pretty early. Lord, but we all feel that way sometimes. I've seen the day when—but never mind that; you may be busy; just hand it to Hawley—the certificate, you understand, is not transferable.

Clemens was in good standing at Washington during the Cleveland administration, and many letters came, asking him to use his influence with the President to obtain this or that favor. He always declined, though once—a few years later, in Europe—when he learned that Frank Mason, consul-general at Frankfort, was about to be displaced, Clemens, of his own accord, wrote to Baby Ruth Cleveland about it.

MY DEAR RUTH,—I belong to the Mugwumps, and one of the most sacred rules of our order prevents us from asking favors of officials or recommending men to office, but there is no harm in writing a friendly letter to you and telling you that an infernal outrage is about to be committed by your father in turning out of office the best Consul I know (and I know a great many) just because he is a Republican and a Democrat wants his place.

He went on to recall Mason's high and honorable record, suggesting that Miss Ruth take the matter into her own hands. Then he said:

I can't send any message to the President, but the next time you have a talk with him concerning such matters I wish you would tell him about Captain Mason and what I think of a Government that so treats its efficient officials.

Just what form of appeal the small agent made is not recorded, but by and by Mark Twain received a tiny envelope, postmarked Washington, inclosing this note in President Cleveland's handwriting:

Miss Ruth Cleveland begs to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Twain's letter and say that she took the liberty of reading it to the President, who desires her to thank Mr. Twain for her information, and to say to him that Captain Mason will not be disturbed in the Frankfort Consulate. The President also desires Miss Cleveland to say that if Mr. Twain knows of any other cases of this kind he will be greatly obliged if he will write him concerning them at his earliest convenience.

Clemens immensely admired Grover Cleveland, also his young wife, and his visits to Washington were not infrequent. Mrs. Clemens was not always able to accompany him, and he has told us how once (it was his first visit after the President's marriage) she put a little note in the pocket of his evening waistcoat, which he would be sure to find when dressing, warning him about his deportment.

Being presented to Mrs. Cleveland, he handed her a card on which he had written "He didn't," and asked her to sign her name below those words. Mrs. Cleveland protested that she couldn't sign it unless she knew what it was he hadn't done; but he insisted, and she promised to sign if he would tell her immediately afterward all about it. She signed, and he handed her Mrs. Clemens's note, which was very brief. It said:

"Don't wear your arctics in the White House."

Mrs. Cleveland summoned a messenger and had the card she had signed mailed at once to Mrs. Clemens at Hartford.

He was not always so well provided against disaster. Once, without consulting his engagements, he agreed to assist Mrs. Cleveland at a dedication, only to find that he must write an apology later. In his letter he said:

I do not know how it is in the White House, but in this house of ours whenever the minor half of the administration tries to run itself without the help of the major half it gets aground.

He explained his position, and added:

I suppose the President often acts just like that; goes and makes an impossible promise, and you never find it out until it is next to impossible to break it up and set things straight again. Well, that is just our way exactly—one-half the administration always busy getting the family into trouble and the other half busy getting it out.

CLXVI

A "PLAYER" AND A MASTER OF ARTS

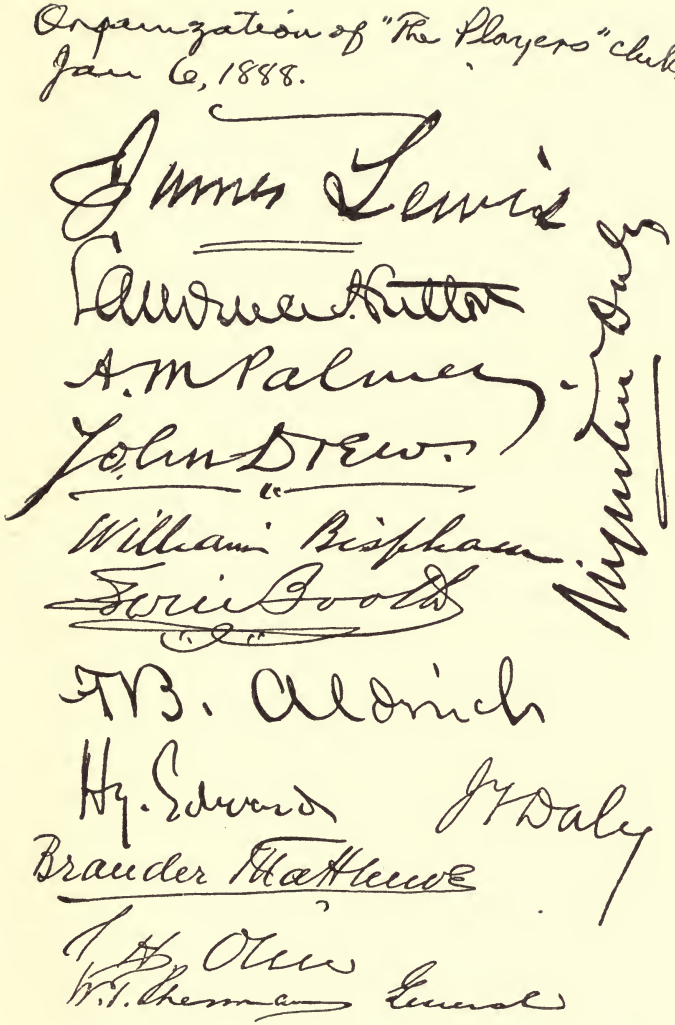
ONE morning early in January Clemens received the following note:

DALY'S THEATER, NEW YORK, *January 2, 1888.*

Mr. Augustin Daly will be very much pleased to have Mr. S. L. Clemens meet Mr. Booth, Mr. Barrett, and Mr. Palmer and a few friends at lunch on Friday next, January 6th (at one o'clock in Delmonico's), to discuss the formation of a new club which it is thought will claim your (*sic*) interest.

R. S. V. P.

There were already in New York a variety of literary and artistic societies, such as The Kinsmen and Tile clubs, with which Clemens was more or less associated. It was proposed now to form a more comprehensive and pretentious organization—one that would include the various associated arts. The conception of this new club, which was to be called The Players, had grown out of a desire on the part of Edwin Booth to confer some enduring benefit upon the members of his profession. It had been discussed during a summer cruise on Mr. E. C. Benedict's steam-yacht by a little party which, besides the owner, consisted of Booth himself, Aldrich, Lawrence Barrett, William Bispham, and Laurence Hutton. Booth's original idea had been to endow some sort of an actors' home, but after due consideration this did not appear to be the best plan. Some one proposed a club, and Aldrich, with never-failing inspiration, suggested its name, The Players,



REVERSE SIDE OF MARK TWAIN'S MENU CARD OF THE DALY LUNCHEON AT WHICH "THE PLAYERS" WAS FORMED

Mr. Clemens himself failed to sign it but wrote the line at the top.

which immediately impressed Booth and the others. It was then decided that members of all the kindred arts should be admitted, and this was the plan discussed and perfected at the Daly luncheon. The guests became charter members, and The Players became an incorporated fact early in January, 1888.[1] Booth purchased the fine old brownstone residence at 16 Gramercy Park, and had expensive alterations made under the directions of Stanford White to adapt it for club purposes. He bore the entire cost, furnished it from garret to cellar, gave it his books and pictures, his rare collections of every sort. Laurence Hutton, writing of it afterward, said:

> And on the first Founder's Night, the 31st of December, 1888, he transferred it all to the association, a munificent gift, absolutely without parallel in its way. The pleasure it gave to Booth during the few remaining years of his life was very great. He made it his home. Next to his own immediate family it was his chief interest, care, and consolation. He nursed and petted it, as it nursed and petted and honored him. He died in it. And it is certainly his greatest monument.

There is no other club quite like The Players. The personality of Edwin Booth pervades it, and there is a spirit in its atmosphere not found in other large clubs—a spirit of unity, and ancient friendship, and mellowness which usually come only of small membership and long establishment. Mark Twain was always fond of The Players, and more than once made it his home. It is a true home, and its members are a genuine brotherhood.

It was in June, 1888, that Yale College conferred upon Samuel Clemens the degree of Master of Arts. It was his

[1] Besides Mr. Booth himself, the charter members were: Lawrence Barrett, William Bispham, Samuel L. Clemens, Augustin Daly, Joseph F. Daly, John Drew, Henry Edwards, Laurence Hutton, Joseph Jefferson, John A. Lane, James Lewis, Brander Matthews, Stephen H. Olin, A. M. Palmer, and William T. Sherman.

first honor of this kind, and he was proud of it. To Charles Hopkins ("Charley") Clark, who had been appointed to apprise him of the honor, he wrote:

I felt mighty proud of that degree; in fact I could squeeze the truth a little closer and say vain of it. And why shouldn't I be? I am the only literary animal of my particular subspecies who has ever been given a degree by any college in any age of the world as far as I know.

To which Clark answered:

My dear Friend,—You are "the only literary animal of your particular subspecies" in existence, and you've no cause for humility in the fact. Yale has done herself at least as much credit as she has done you, and "don't you forget it."

C. H. C.

Clemens could not attend the alumni dinner, being at Elmira and unable to get away, but in an address he made at Yale College later in the year he thus freely expressed himself:

I was sincerely proud and grateful to be made a Master of Arts by this great and venerable University, and I would have come last June to testify this feeling, as I do now testify it, but that the sudden and unexpected notice of the honor done me found me at a distance from home and unable to discharge that duty and enjoy that privilege.

Along at first, say for the first month or so, I did not quite know how to proceed because of my not knowing just what authorities and privileges belonged to the title which had been granted me, but after that I consulted some students of Trinity —in Hartford—and they made everything clear to me. It was through them that I found out that my title made me head of the Governing Body of the University, and lodged in me very broad and severely responsible powers.

I was told that it would be necessary to report to you at this time, and of course I comply, though I would have preferred to put it off till I could make a better showing; for indeed I have

been so pertinaciously hindered and obstructed at every turn by the faculty that it would be difficult to prove that the University is really in any better shape now than it was when I first took charge. By advice, I turned my earliest attention to the Greek department. I told the Greek professor I had concluded to drop the use of Greek-written character because it is so hard to spell with, and so impossible to read after you get it spelt. Let us draw the curtain there. I saw by what followed that nothing but early neglect saved him from being a very profane man. I ordered the professor of mathematics to simplify the whole system, because the way it was I couldn't understand it, and I didn't want things going on in the college in what was practically a clandestine fashion. I told him to drop the conundrum system; it was not suited to the dignity of a college, which should deal in facts, not guesses and suppositions; we didn't want any more cases of *if* A and B stand at opposite poles of the earth's surface and C at the equator of Jupiter, at what variations of angle will the left limb of the moon appear to these different parties?—I said you just let that thing alone; it's plenty time to get in a sweat about it when it happens; as like as not it ain't going to do any harm, anyway. His reception of these instructions bordered on insubordination, insomuch that I felt obliged to take his number and report him. I found the astronomer of the University gadding around after comets and other such odds and ends—tramps and derelicts of the skies. I told him pretty plainly that we couldn't have that. I told him it was no economy to go on piling up and piling up raw material in the way of new stars and comets and asteroids that we couldn't ever have any use for till we had worked off the old stock. At bottom I don't really mind comets so much, but somehow I have always been down on asteroids. There is nothing mature about them; I wouldn't sit up nights the way that man does if I could get a basketful of them. He said it was the best line of goods he had; he said he could trade them to Rochester for comets, and trade the comets to Harvard for nebulæ, and trade the nebulæ to the Smithsonian for flint hatchets. I felt obliged to stop this thing on the spot; I said we couldn't have the University turned into an astronomical junk-shop. And while I was at it I thought I might as well make the reform complete; the astronomer is extraordinarily mutinous,

and so, with your approval, I will transfer him to the law department and put one of the law students in his place. A boy will be more biddable, more tractable, also cheaper. It is true he cannot be intrusted with important work at first, but he can comb the skies for nebulæ till he gets his hand in. I have other changes in mind, but as they are in the nature of surprises I judge it politic to leave them unspecified at this time.

Very likely it was in this new capacity, as the head of the governing body, that he wrote one morning to Clark advising him as to the misuse of a word in the *Courant*, though he thought it best to sign the communication with the names of certain learned friends, to give it weight with the public, as he afterward explained.

SIR,—The word "patricide" in your issue of this morning (telegrams) was an error. You meant it to describe the slayer of a father; you should have used "parricide" instead. Patricide merely means the killing of an Irishman—any Irishman, male or female.

Respectfully,
J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL.
N. J. BURTON.
J. H. TWICHELL.

CLXVII

NOTES AND LITERARY MATTERS

CLEMENS'S note-books of this time are full of the vexations of his business ventures, figures, suggestions, and a hundred imagined combinations for betterment—these things intermingled with the usual bits of philosophy and reflections, and amusing reminders.

Aldrich's man who painted the fat toads red, and naturalist chasing and trying to catch them.

Man who lost his false teeth over Brooklyn Bridge when he was on his way to propose to a widow.

One believes St.-Simon and Benvenuto and partly believes the Margravine of Bayreuth. There are things in the confession of Rousseau which one must believe.

What is biography? Unadorned romance. What is romance? Adorned biography. Adorn it less and it will be better than it is.

If God is what people say there can be none in the universe so unhappy as he; for he sees unceasingly myriads of his creatures suffering unspeakable miseries, and, besides this, foresees all they are going to suffer during the remainder of their lives. One might well say "as unhappy as God."

In spite of the financial complexities and the drain of the enterprises already in hand he did not fail to conceive others. He was deeply interested in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* at the moment, and from photography and scenic effect he presaged a possibility to-day realized in the moving picture.

Dress up some good actors as Apollyon, Greatheart, etc., & the other Bunyan characters, take them to a wild gorge and photograph them—Valley of the Shadow of Death; to other effective places & photo them along with the scenery; to Paris, in their curious costumes, place them near the Arc de l'Étoile & photo them with the crowd—Vanity Fair; to Cairo, Venice, Jerusalem, & other places (twenty interesting cities) & always make them conspicuous in the curious foreign crowds by their costume. Take them to Zululand. It would take two or three years to do the photographing & cost $10,000; but this stereopticon panorama of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* could be exhibited in all countries at the same time & would clear a fortune in a year. By & by I will do this.

If in 1891 I find myself not rich enough to carry out my scheme of buying Christopher Columbus's bones & burying them under the Statue of Liberty Enlightening the World I will give the idea to somebody who *is* rich enough.

Incidentally he did an occasional piece of literary work. Early in the year, with Brander Matthews, he instructed and entertained the public with a copyright controversy in the Princeton *Review*. Matthews would appear to have criticized the English copyright protection, or rather the lack of it, comparing it unfavorably with American conditions. Clemens, who had been amply protected in Great Britain, replied that America was in no position to criticize England; that if American authors suffered in England they had themselves to blame for not taking the proper trouble and precautions required by the English law, that is to say, "previous publication" on English soil. He declared that his own books had been as safe in England as at home since he had undertaken to comply with English requirements, and that Professor Matthews was altogether mistaken, both as to premise and conclusion.

"You are the very wrong-headedest person in America," he said; "and you are injudicious." And of the article: "I read it to the cat—well, I never saw a cat carry on so

before. . . . The American author can go to Canada, spend three days there and come home with an English and American copyright as strong as if it had been built out of railroad iron."

Matthews replied that not every one could go to Canada, any more than to Corinth. He said:

"It is not easy for a poor author who may chance to live in Florida or Texas, those noted homes of literature, to go to Canada."

Clemens did not reply again; that is to say, he did not publish his reply. It was a capable bomb which he prepared, well furnished with amusing instance, sarcasm, and ridicule, but he did not use it. Perhaps he was afraid it would destroy his opponent, which would not do. In his heart he loved Matthews. He laid the deadly thing away and maintained a dignified reserve.

Clemens often felt called upon to criticize American institutions, but he was first to come to their defense, especially when the critic was an alien. When Matthew Arnold offered some strictures on America, Clemens covered a good many quires of paper with caustic replies. He even defended American newspapers, which he had himself more than once violently assailed for misreporting him and for other journalistic shortcomings, and he bitterly denounced every shaky British institution, touched upon every weak spot in hereditary rule. He did not print—not then[1]—he was writing mainly for relief—without success, however, for he only kindled the fires of his indignation. He was at Quarry Farm and he plunged into his neglected story—*A Yankee in King Arthur's Court*—and made his astonishing hero the mouthpiece of his doctrines. He worked with an inspiration and energy born

[1] An article on the American press, probably the best of those prepared at this time, was used, in part, in *The American Claimant*, as the paper read before the Mechanics' Club, by "Parker," assistant editor of the *Democrat*.

of his ferocity. To Whitmore, near the end of the summer, he wrote:

I've got 16 working-days left yet, and in that time I will add another 120,000 words to my book if I have luck.

In his memoranda of this time he says:

There was never a throne which did not represent a crime. There is no throne to-day which does not represent a crime. . . .

Show me a lord and I will show you a man whom you couldn't tell from a journeyman shoemaker if he were stripped, and who, in all that is worth being, is the shoemaker's inferior; and in the shoemaker I will show you a dull animal, a poor-spirited insect; for there are enough of him to rise and chuck the lords and royalties into the sea where they belong, and he doesn't do it.

But his violence waned, maybe, for he did not finish the *Yankee* in the sixteen days as planned. He brought the manuscript back to Hartford, but found it hard work there, owing to many interruptions. He went over to Twichell's and asked for a room where he might work in seclusion. They gave him a big upper chamber, but some repairs were going on below. From a letter written to Theodore Crane we gather that it was not altogether quiet.

Friday, October 5, 1888.

DEAR THEO,—I am here in Twichell's house at work, with the noise of the children and an army of carpenters to help. Of course they don't help, but neither do they hinder. It's like a boiler factory for racket, and in nailing a wooden ceiling on to the room under me the hammering tickles my feet amazingly sometimes and jars my table a good deal, but I never am conscious of the racket at all, and I move my feet into positions of relief without knowing when I do it. I began here Monday morning, and have done eighty pages since. I was so tired last night that I thought I would lie abed and rest to-day; but I couldn't resist. I mean to try to knock off to-morrow, but it's doubtful if I do. I want to finish the day the machine finishes,

and a week ago the closest calculations for that indicated Oct. 22—but experience teaches me that the calculations will miss fire as usual.

The other day the children were projecting a purchase, Livy and I to furnish the money—a dollar and a half. Jean discouraged the idea. She said, "We haven't got any money. Children, if you would think, you would remember the machine isn't done."

It's billiards to-night. I wish you were here.

With love to you both, S. L. C.

P. S.—*I* got it all wrong. It wasn't the children, it was Marie. She wanted a box of blacking for the children's shoes. Jean reproved her and said, "Why, Marie, you mustn't *ask* for things now. The machine isn't done."

Neither the *Yankee* nor the machine was completed that fall, though returns from both were beginning to be badly needed. The financial pinch was not yet severe, but it was noticeable, and it did not relax.

A memorandum of this time tells of an anniversary given to Charles and Susan Warner in their own home. The guests assembled at the Clemens home, the Twichells among them, and slipped across to Warner's, entering through a window. Dinner was then announced to the Warners, who were sitting by their library fire. They came across the hall and opened the dining-room door, to be confronted by a table fully spread and lighted and an array of guests already seated.

CLXVIII

INTRODUCING NYE AND RILEY AND OTHERS

IT was the winter (1888–89) that the Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley entertainment combination set out on its travels. Mark Twain introduced them to their first Boston audience. Major J. B. Pond was exploiting Nye and Riley, and Clemens went on to Boston especially to hear them. Pond happened upon him in the lobby of the Parker House and insisted that nothing would do but he must introduce them. In his book of memories which he published later Pond wrote:

> He replied that he believed I was his mortal enemy, and determined that he should never have an evening's enjoyment in my presence. He consented, however, and conducted his brother-humorist and the Hoosier poet to the platform. Mark's presence was a surprise to the audience, and when they recognized him the demonstration was tremendous. The audience rose in a body, and men and women shouted at the very top of their voices. Handkerchiefs waved, the organist even opened every forte key and pedal in the great organ, and the noise went on unabated for minutes. It took some time for the crowd to get down to listening, but when they did subside, as Mark stepped to the front, the silence was as impressive as the noise had been.

He presented the Nye-Riley pair as the Siamese Twins. "I saw them first," he said, "a great many years ago, when Mr. Barnum had them, and they were just fresh from Siam. The ligature was their best hold then, but literature became their best hold later, when one of them committed an indiscretion, and they had to cut the old bond to accommodate the sheriff."

He continued this comic fancy, and the audience was in a proper frame of mind, when he had finished, to welcome the "Twins of Genius" who were to entertain them.

Pond says:

> It was a carnival of fun in every sense of the word. Bostonians will not have another such treat in this generation.

Pond proposed to Clemens a regular tour with Nye and Riley. He wrote:

> I will go partners with you, and I will buy Nye and Riley's time and give an entertainment something like the one we gave in Boston. Let it be announced that you will introduce the "Twins of Genius." Ostensibly a pleasure trip for you. I will take one-third of the profits and you two-thirds. I can tell you it will be the biggest thing that can be brought before the American public.

But Clemens, badly as he was beginning to need the money, put this temptation behind him. His chief diversion these days was in gratuitous appearances. He had made up his mind not to read or lecture again for pay, but he seemed to take a peculiar enjoyment in doing these things as a benefaction. That he was beginning to need the money may have added a zest to the joy of his giving. He did not respond to all invitations; he could have been traveling constantly had he done so. He consulted with Mrs. Clemens and gave himself to the cause that seemed most worthy. In January Col. Richard Malcolm Johnston was billed to give a reading with Thomas Nelson Page in Baltimore. Page's wife fell ill and died, and Colonel Johnston, in extremity, wired Charles Dudley Warner to come in Page's place. Warner, unable to go, handed the invitation to Clemens, who promptly wired that he would come. They read to a packed house, and when the audience was gone and the returns had been counted an equal division of the profits

was handed to each of the authors. Clemens pushed his share over to Johnston, saying:

"That's yours, Colonel. I'm not reading for money these days."

Colonel Johnston, to whom the sum was important, tried to thank him, but he only said:

"Never mind, Colonel, it only gave me pleasure to do you that little favor. You can pass it on some day."

As a matter of fact, hard put to it as he was for funds, Clemens at this time regarded himself as a potential multi-millionaire. The type-setting machine which for years had been sapping his financial strength was believed to be perfected, and ship-loads of money were waiting in the offing. However, we shall come to this later.

Clemens read for the cadets at West Point and for a variety of institutions and on many special occasions. He usually gave chapters from his *Yankee*, now soon to be finished, chapters generally beginning with the Yankee's impression of the curious country and its people, ending with the battle of the Sun-belt, when the Yankee and his fifty-four adherents were masters of England, with twenty-five thousand dead men lying about them. He gave this at West Point, including the chapter where the Yankee has organized a West Point of his own in King Arthur's reign.

In April, '89, he made an address at a dinner given to a victorious baseball team returning from a tour of the world by way of the Sandwich Islands. He was on familiar ground there. His heart was in his words. He began:

I have been in the Sandwich Islands—twenty-three years ago—that peaceful land, that beautiful land, that far-off home of solitude, and soft idleness, and repose, and dreams, where life is one long slumberous Sabbath, the climate one long summer day, and the good that die experience no change, for they but fall asleep in one heaven and wake up in another. And these boys

have played baseball there!—baseball, which is the very symbol, the outward and visible expression, of the drive and push and rush and struggle of the living, tearing, booming nineteenth, the mightiest of all the centuries!

He told of the curious island habits for his hearers' amusement, but at the close the poetry of his memories once more possessed him:

Ah, well, it is refreshment to the jaded, it is water to the thirsty, to look upon men who have so lately breathed the soft air of those Isles of the Blest and had before their eyes the inextinguishable vision of their beauty. No alien land in all the earth has any deep, strong charm for me but that one; no other land could so longingly and so beseechingly haunt me, sleeping and waking, through half a lifetime, as that one has done. Other things leave me, but it abides; other things change, but it remains the same. For me its balmy airs are always blowing, its summer seas flashing in the sun; the pulsing of its surf is in my ear; I can see its garlanded crags, its leaping cascades, its plumy palms drowsing by the shore, its remote summits floating like islands above the cloud-rack; I can feel the spirit of its woody solitudes, I hear the plashing of the brooks; in my nostrils still lives the breath of flowers that perished twenty years ago.

CLXIX

THE COMING OF KIPLING

IT was the summer of 1889 that Mark Twain first met Rudyard Kipling. Kipling was making his tour around the world, a young man wholly unheard of outside of India. He was writing letters home to an Indian journal, *The Pioneer*, and he came to Elmira especially to see Mark Twain. It was night when he arrived, and next morning some one at the hotel directed him to Quarry Farm. In a hired hack he made his way out through the suburbs, among the buzzing planing-mills and sash factories, and toiled up the long, dusty, roasting east hill, only to find that Mark Twain was at General Langdon's, in the city he had just left behind. Mrs. Crane and Susy Clemens were the only ones left at the farm, and they gave him a seat on the veranda and brought him glasses of water or cool milk while he refreshed them with his talk—talk which Mark Twain once said might be likened to footprints, so strong and definite was the impression which it left behind. He gave them his card, on which the address was Allahabad, and Susy preserved it on that account, because to her India was a fairyland, made up of magic, airy architecture, and dark mysteries. Clemens once dictated a memory of Kipling's visit.

Kipling had written upon the card a compliment to me. This gave it an additional value in Susy's eyes, since, as a distinction, it was the next thing to being recognized by a denizen of the moon.

Kipling came down that afternoon and spent a couple of

hours with me, and at the end of that time I had surprised him as much as he had surprised me—and the honors were easy. I believed that he knew more than any person I had met before, and I knew that he knew that I knew less than any person he had met before—though he did not say it, and I was not expecting that he would. When he was gone Mrs. Langdon wanted to know about my visitor. I said:

"He is a stranger to me, but he is a most remarkable man—and I am the other one. Between us we cover all knowledge; he knows all that can be known, and I know the rest."

He was a stranger to me and to all the world, and remained so for twelve months, then he became suddenly known, and universally known. From that day to this he has held this unique distinction—that of being the only living person, not head of a nation, whose voice is heard around the world the moment it drops a remark; the only such voice in existence that does not go by slow ship and rail, but always travels first-class—by cable.

About a year after Kipling's visit in Elmira George Warner came into our library one morning in Hartford with a small book in his hand and asked me if I had ever heard of Rudyard Kipling. I said, "No."

He said I would hear of him very soon, and that the noise he was going to make would be loud and continuous. The little book was the *Plain Tales*, and he left it for me to read, saying it was charged with a new and inspiriting fragrance, and would blow a refreshing breath around the world that would revive the nations. A day or two later he brought a copy of the London *World* which had a sketch of Kipling in it, and a mention of the fact that he had traveled in the United States. According to this sketch he had passed through Elmira. This remark, with the additional fact that he hailed from India, attracted my attention—also Susy's. She went to her room and brought his card from its place in the frame of her mirror, and the Quarry Farm visitor stood identified.

Kipling also has left an account of that visit. In his letter recording it he says:

You are a contemptible lot over yonder. Some of you are Commissioners and some are Lieutenant-Governors, and some

have the V. C., and a few are privileged to walk about the Mall arm in arm with the Viceroy; but I have seen Mark Twain this golden morning, have shaken his hand and smoked a cigar—no, two cigars—with him, and talked with him for more than two hours! Understand clearly that I do not despise you; indeed, I don't. I am only very sorry for you, from the Viceroy downward.

A big, darkened drawing-room; a huge chair; a man with eyes, a mane of grizzled hair, a brown mustache covering a mouth as delicate as a woman's, a strong, square hand shaking mine, and the slowest, calmest, levelest voice in all the world saying:

"Well, you think you owe me something, and you've come to tell me so. That's what I call squaring a debt handsomely."

"Piff!" from a cob-pipe (I always said that a Missouri meerschaum was the best smoking in the world), and behold! Mark Twain had curled himself up in the big arm-chair, and I was smoking reverently, as befits one in the presence of his superior.

The thing that struck me first was that he was an elderly man; yet, after a minute's thought, I perceived that it was otherwise, and in five minutes, the eyes looking at me, I saw that the gray hair was an accident of the most trivial. He was quite young. I was shaking his hand. I was smoking his cigar, and I was hearing him talk—this man I had learned to love and admire fourteen thousand miles away.

Reading his books, I had striven to get an idea of his personality, and all my preconceived notions were wrong and beneath the reality. Blessed is the man who finds no disillusion when he is brought face to face with a revered writer.

The meeting of those two men made the summer of '89 memorable in later years. But it was recalled sadly, too. Theodore Crane, who had been taken suddenly and dangerously ill the previous autumn, had a recurring attack and died July 3d. It was the first death in the immediate families for more than seventeen years. Mrs. Clemens, remembering that earlier period of sorrow, was depressed with forebodings.

CLXX

"THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER" ON THE STAGE

THERE was an unusual dramatic interest in the Clemens home that autumn. Abby Sage Richardson had dramatized *The Prince and the Pauper*, and Daniel Frohman had secured Elsie Leslie (Lyde) to take the double rôle of the Prince and Tom Canty. The rehearsals were going on, and the Clemens children were naturally a good deal excited over the outcome. Susy Clemens was inspired to write a play of her own—a pretty Greek fancy, called "The Triumph of Music," and when it was given on Thanksgiving night, by herself, with Clara and Jean and Margaret Warner, it was really a lovely performance, and carried one back to the days when emotions were personified, and nymphs haunted the seclusions of Arcady. Clemens was proud of Susy's achievement, and deeply moved by it. He insisted on having the play repeated, and it was given again later in the year.

Pretty Elsie Leslie became a favorite of the Clemens household. She was very young, and when she visited Hartford Jean and she were companions and romped together in the hay-loft. She was also a favorite of William Gillette. One day when Clemens and Gillette were together they decided to give the little girl a surprise —a unique one. They agreed to embroider a pair of slippers for her—to do the work themselves. Writing to her of it, Mark Twain said:

Either one of us could have thought of a single slipper, but it took both of us to think of two slippers. In fact, one of us

did think of one slipper, and then, quick as a flash, the other of the other one. It shows how wonderful the human mind is. . . .

Gillette embroidered his slipper with astonishing facility and splendor, but I have been a long time pulling through with mine. You see, it was my very first attempt at art, and I couldn't rightly get the hang of it along at first. And then I was so busy that I couldn't get a chance to work at it at home, and they wouldn't let me embroider on the cars; they said it made the other passengers afraid. They didn't like the light that flared into my eye when I had an inspiration. And even the most fair-minded people doubted me when I explained what it was I was making—especially brakemen. Brakemen always swore at it and carried on, the way ignorant people do about art. They wouldn't take my word that it was a slipper; they said they believed it was a snow-shoe that had some kind of disease.

He went on to explain and elucidate the pattern of the slipper, and how Dr. Root had come in and insisted on taking a hand in it, and how beautiful it was to see him sit there and tell Mrs. Clemens what had been happening while they were away during the summer, holding the slipper up toward the end of his nose, imagining the canvas was a "subject" with a scalp-wound, working with a "lovely surgical stitch," never hesitating a moment in his talk except to say "Ouch!" when he stuck himself with the needle.

Take the slippers and wear them next your heart, Elsie dear; for every stitch in them is a testimony of the affection which two of your loyalest friends bear you. Every single stitch cost us blood. I've got twice as many pores in me now as I used to have; and you would never believe how many places you can stick a needle in yourself until you go into the embroidery line and devote yourself to art.

Do not wear these slippers in public, dear; it would only excite envy; and, as like as not, somebody would try to shoot you.

Merely use them to assist you in remembering that among the many, many people who think all the world of you is your friend,

MARK TWAIN.

"PRINCE AND PAUPER" ON THE STAGE

The play of "The Prince and the Pauper," dramatized by Mrs. Richardson and arranged for the stage by David Belasco, was produced at the Park Theater, Philadelphia, on Christmas Eve. It was a success, but not a lavish one. The play was well written and staged, and Elsie Leslie was charming enough in her parts, but in the duality lay the difficulty. The strongest scenes in the story had to be omitted when one performer played both Tom Canty and the little Prince. The play came to New York—to the Broadway Theater—and was well received. On the opening night there Mark Twain made a speech, in which he said that the presentation of "The Prince and the Pauper" realized a dream which fifteen years before had possessed him all through a long down-town tramp, amid the crowds and confusion of Broadway. In Elsie Leslie, he said, he had found the embodiment of his dream, and to her he offered homage as the only prince clothed in a divine right which was not rags and sham—the divine right of an inborn supremacy in art.

It seems incredible to-day that, realizing the play's possibilities as Mark Twain did, and as Belasco and Daniel Frohman must have done, they did not complete their partial triumph by finding another child actress to take the part of Tom Canty. Clemens urged and pleaded with them, but perhaps the undertaking seemed too difficult—at all events they did not find the little beggar king. Then legal complications developed. Edward House, to whom Clemens had once given a permission to attempt a dramatization of the play, suddenly appeared with a demand for recognition, backed by a lawsuit against all those who had a proprietary interest in the production. House, with his adopted Japanese daughter Koto, during a period of rheumatism and financial depression, had made a prolonged visit in the Clemens home and originally undertook the dramatization as a sort of return for hospitality. He appears not to have completed it and to

have made no arrangement for its production or to have taken any definite step until Mrs. Richardson's play was profitably put on; whereupon his suit and injunction.

By the time a settlement of this claim had been reached the play had run its course, and it was not revived in that form. It was brought out in England, where it was fairly prosperous, though it seems not to have been long continued. Variously reconstructed, it has occasionally been played since, and always, when the parts of Tom Canty and the Prince were separate, with great success. Why this beautiful drama should ever be absent from the boards is one of the unexplainable things. It is a play for all times and seasons, the difficulty of obtaining suitable "twin" interpreters for the characters of the Prince and the Pauper being its only drawback.

CLXXI

"A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT"

FROM every point of view it seemed necessary to make the *Yankee in King Arthur's Court* an important and pretentious publication. It was Mark Twain's first book after a silence of five years; it was a book badly needed by his publishing business with which to maintain its prestige and profit; it was a book which was to come out of his maturity and present his deductions, as to humanity at large and kings in particular, to a waiting public. It was determined to spare no expense on the manufacture, also that its illustrations must be of a sort to illuminate and, indeed, to elaborate the text. Clemens had admired some pictures made by Daniel Carter ("Dan") Beard for a Chinese story in the *Cosmopolitan*, and made up his mind that Beard was the man for the *Yankee*. The manuscript was sent to Beard, who met Clemens a little later in the office of Webster & Co. to discuss the matter. Clemens said:

"Mr. Beard, I do not want to subject you to any undue suffering, but I wish you would read the book before you make the pictures."

Beard replied that he had already read it twice.

"Very good," Clemens said; "but I wasn't led to suppose that that was the usual custom among illustrators, judging from some results I have seen. You know," he went on, "this Yankee of mine has neither the refinement nor the weakness of a college education; he is a perfect ignoramus; he is boss of a machine shop; he can build a

locomotive or a Colt's revolver, he can put up and run a telegraph line, but he's an ignoramus, nevertheless. I am not going to tell you what to draw. If a man comes to me and says, 'Mr. Clemens, I want you to write me a story,' I'll write it for him; but if he undertakes to tell me what to write I'll say, 'Go hire a typewriter.'"

To Hall a few days later he wrote:

Tell Beard to obey his own inspirations, and when he sees a picture in his mind put that picture on paper, be it humorous or be it serious. I want his genius to be wholly unhampered. I sha'n't have any fear as to results.

Without going further it is proper to say here that the pictures in the first edition of *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* justified the author's faith in the artist of his selection. They are far and away Dan Beard's best work. The socialism of the text strongly appealed to him. Beard himself had socialistic tendencies, and the work inspired him to his highest flights of fancy and to the acme of his technic. Clemens examined the pictures from time to time, and once was moved to write:

My pleasure in them is as strong and as fresh as ever. I do not know of any quality they lack. Grace, dignity, poetry, spirit, imagination, these enrich them and make them charming and beautiful; and wherever humor appears it is high and fine—easy, unforced, kept under, masterly, and delicious.

He went on to describe his appreciation in detail, and when the drawings were complete he wrote again:

Hold me under permanent obligations. What luck it was to find you! There are hundreds of artists who could illustrate any other book of mine, but there was only one who could illustrate this one. Yes, it was a fortunate hour that I went netting for lightning-bugs and caught a meteor. Live forever!

This was not too much praise. Beard realized the last shade of the author's allegorical intent and portrayed it with a hundred accents which the average reader would otherwise be likely to miss.

Clemens submitted his manuscript to Howells and to Stedman, and he read portions of it, at least, to Mrs. Clemens, whose eyes were troubling her so that she could not read for herself. Stedman suggested certain eliminations, but, on the whole, would seem to have approved of the book. Howells was enthusiastic. It appealed to him as it had appealed to Beard. Its sociology and its socialism seemed to him the final word that could be said on those subjects. When he had partly finished it he wrote:

It's a mighty great book and it makes my heart burn with wrath. It seems that God didn't forget to put a soul in you. He shuts most literary men off with a brain, merely.

A few days later he wrote again:

The book is glorious—simply noble. What masses of virgin truth never touched in print before!

And when he had finished it:

Last night I read your last chapter. As Stedman says of the whole book, it's titanic.

Clemens declared, in one of his replies to Howells:

I'm not writing for those parties who miscall themselves critics, and I don't care to have them paw the book at all. It's my swan song, my retirement from literature permanently, and I wish to pass to the cemetery unclodded. . . . Well, my book is written—let it go, but if it were only to write over again there wouldn't be so many things left out. They burn in me; they keep multiplying and multiplying, but now they can't ever be said; and besides they would require a library—and a pen warmed up in hell.

In another letter of this time to Sylvester Baxter, apropos of the tumbling Brazilian throne, he wrote:

> When our great brethren, the disenslaved Brazilians, frame their declaration of independence I hope they will insert this missing link: "We hold these truths to be self-evident—that all monarchs are usurpers and descendants of usurpers, for the reason that no throne was ever set up in this world by the will, freely exercised, of the only body possessing the legitimate right to set it up—the numerical mass of the nation."

He was full of it, as he had been all along, and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* is nothing less than a brief for human rights and human privileges. That is what it is, and it is a pity that it should be more than that. It is a pity that he should have been beset by his old demon of the burlesque, and that no one should have had the wisdom or the strength to bring it under control.

There is nothing more charming in any of Mark Twain's work than his introductory chapter, nothing more delightful than the armoring of the Yankee and the outset and the wandering with Alisande. There is nothing more powerful or inspiring than his splendid panoramic picture of the King learning mercy through his own degradation, his daily intercourse with a band of manacled slaves; nothing more fiercely moving than that fearful incident of the woman burned to warm those freezing chattels, or than the great gallows scene, where the priest speaks for the young mother about to pay the death penalty for having stolen a halfpenny's worth, that her baby might have bread. Such things as these must save the book from oblivion; but alas! its greater appeal is marred almost to ruin by coarse and extravagant burlesque, which destroys illusion and antagonizes the reader often at the very moment when the tale should fill him with a holy fire of a righteous wrath against wrong. As an example of Mark Twain at his literary worst and best the *Yankee*

ranks supreme. It is unnecessary to quote examples; one cannot pick up the volume and read ten pages of it, or five pages, without finding them. In the midst of some exalted passage, some towering sublimity, you are brought suddenly to earth with a phrase which wholly destroys the illusion and the diviner purpose. Howells must have observed these things, or was he so dazzled by the splendor of its intent, its righteous charge upon the ranks of oppression, that he regarded its offenses against art as unimportant. This is hard to explain, for the very thing that would sustain such a great message and make it permanent would be the care, the restraint, the artistic worthiness of its construction. One must believe in a story like that to be convinced of its logic. To lose faith in it—in its narrative—is absolutely fatal to its purpose. The *Yankee in King Arthur's Court* not only offended the English nation, but much of it offended the better taste of Mark Twain's own countrymen, and in time it must have offended even Mark Twain himself. Reading it, one can visualize the author as a careering charger, with a bit in his teeth, trampling the poetry and the tradition of the romantic days, the very things which he himself in his happier moods cared for most. Howells likened him to Cervantes, laughing Spain's chivalry away. The comparison was hardly justified. It was proper enough to laugh chivalry out of court when it was a reality; but Mark Twain, who loved Sir Thomas Malory to the end of his days, the beauty and poetry of his chronicles; who had written *The Prince and the Pauper*, and would one day write that divine tale of the Maid of Orleans; who was himself no more nor less than a knight always ready to redress wrong, would seem to have been the last person to wish to laugh it out of romance.

And yet, when all is said, one may still agree with Howells in ranking the *Yankee* among Mark Twain's highest achievements in the way of "a greatly imagined

and symmetrically developed tale." It is of that class, beyond doubt. Howells goes further:

> Of all the fanciful schemes in fiction it pleases me most, and I give myself with absolute delight to its notion of a keen East Hartford Yankee finding himself, by a retroactionary spell, at the court of King Arthur of Britain, and becoming part of the sixth century with all the customs and ideas of the nineteenth in him and about him. The field for humanizing satire which this scheme opens is illimitable.

Colossal it certainly is, as Howells and Stedman agreed: colossal in its grotesqueness as in its sublimity. Howells, summarizing Mark Twain's gifts (1901), has written:

> He is apt to burlesque the lighter colloquiality, and it is only in the more serious and most tragical junctures that his people utter themselves with veracious simplicity and dignity. That great, burly fancy of his is always tempting him to the exaggeration which is the condition of so much of his personal humor, but which when it invades the drama spoils the illusion. The illusion renews itself in the great moments, but I wish it could be kept intact in the small, and I blame him that he does not rule his fancy better.

All of which applies precisely to the writing of the *Yankee in King Arthur's Court.* Intended as a fierce heart-cry against human injustice—man's inhumanity to man—as such it will live and find readers; but, more than any other of Mark Twain's pretentious works, it needs editing—trimming by a fond but relentless hand.

CLXXII

THE "YANKEE" IN ENGLAND

THE London publishers of the *Yankee* were keenly anxious to revise the text for their English readers. Clemens wrote that he had already revised the *Yankee* twice, that Stedman had critically read it, and that Mrs. Clemens had made him strike out many passages and soften others. He added that he had read chapters of it in public several times where Englishmen were present and had profited by their suggestions. Then he said:

Now, mind you, I have taken all this pains because I wanted to say a Yankee mechanic's say against monarchy and its several natural props, and yet make a book which you would be willing to print exactly as it comes to you, without altering a word.

We are spoken of (by Englishmen) as a thin-skinned people. It is you who are thin-skinned. An Englishman may write with the most brutal frankness about any man or institution among us and we republish him without dreaming of altering a line or a word. But England cannot stand that kind of a book written about herself. It is England that is thin-skinned. It causeth me to smile when I read the modifications of my language which have been made in my English editions to fit them for the sensitive English palate.

Now, as I say, I have taken laborious pains to so trim this book of offense that you'll not lack the nerve to print it just as it stands. I am going to get the proofs to you just as early as I can. I want you to read it carefully. If you can publish it without altering a single word, go ahead. Otherwise, please hand it to J. R. Osgood in time for him to have it published at my expense.

This is important, for the reason that the book was not written for America; it was written for England. So many Englishmen have done their sincerest best to teach us something for our betterment that it seems to me high time that some of us should substantially recognize the good intent by trying to pry up the English nation to a little higher level of manhood in turn.

So the *Yankee* was published in England just as he had written it,[1] and the criticisms were as plentiful as they were frank. It was referred to as a "lamentable failure" and as an "audacious sacrilege" and in terms still less polite. Not all of the English critics were violent. The *Daily Telegraph* gave it something more than a column of careful review, which did not fail to point out the book's sins with a good deal of justice and dignity; but the majority of English papers joined in a sort of objurgatory chorus which, for a time at least, spared neither the author nor his work. Strictures on the *Yankee* extended to his earlier books. After all, Mark Twain's work was "not for the cultivated class."

These things must have begun to gravel Clemens a good deal at last, for he wrote to Andrew Lang at considerable length, setting forth his case in general terms—that is to say, his position as an author—inviting Lang to stand as his advocate before the English public. In part he said:

The critic assumes every time that if a book doesn't meet the cultivated-class standard it isn't valuable . . . The critic has actually imposed upon the world the superstition that a painting by Raphael is more valuable to the civilizations of the earth than is a chromo; and the august opera more than the hurdy-gurdy and the villagers' singing society; and the Latin classics than Kipling's far-reaching bugle-note; and Jonathan Edwards than the Salvation Army. . . . If a critic should start a religion it would not have any object but to convert angels, and they

[1] The preface was shortened and modified for both the American and English editions. The reader will find it as originally written under Appendix S, at the end of last volume.

wouldn't need it. It is not that little minority who are already saved that are best worth lifting up, I should think, but the mighty mass of the uncultivated who are underneath! That mass will never see the old masters—that sight is for the few; but the chromo-maker can lift them all one step upward toward appreciation of art; they cannot have the opera, but the hurdy-gurdy and the singing-class lift them a little way toward that far height; they will never know Homer, but the passing rhymester of their day leaves them higher than he found them; they may never even hear of the Latin classics, but they will strike step with Kipling's drum-beat and they will march; for all Jonathan Edwards's help they would die in their slums, but the Salvation Army will beguile some of them to a purer air and a cleaner life. . . . I have never tried, in even one single little instance, to help cultivate the cultivated classes. I was not equipped for it either by native gifts or training. And I never had any ambition in that direction, but always hunted for bigger game—the masses. I have seldom deliberately tried to instruct them, but I have done my best to entertain them, for they can get instruction elsewhere. . . . My audience is dumb; it has no voice in print, and so I cannot know whether I have won its approval or only got its censure.

He closed by asking that Lang urge the critics to adopt a rule recognizing the masses, and to formulate a standard whereby work done for them might be judged. "No voice can reach further than yours in a case of this kind," he said, "or carry greater weight of authority." There was no humor in this letter, and the writer of it was clearly in earnest.

Lang's response was an article published in the *Illustrated London News* on the art of Mark Twain. He began by gently ridiculing hyperculture—the new culture—and ended with a eulogy on *Huck Finn*. It seems worth while, however, to let Andrew Lang speak for himself.

I have been educated till I nearly dropped; I have lived with the earliest apostles of culture, in the days when Chippendale was first a name to conjure with, and Japanese art came in like

a raging lion, and Ronsard was the favorite poet, and Mr. William Morris was a poet, too, and blue and green were the only wear, and the name of Paradise was Camelot. To be sure, I cannot say that I took all this quite seriously, but "we, too, have played" at it, and know all about it. Generally speaking, I have kept up with culture. I can talk (if desired) about Sainte-Beuve, and Mérimée, and Félicien Rops; I could rhyme "Ballades" when they were "in," and knew what a "*pantoom*" was. . . . And yet I have not culture. My works are but tinkling brass because I have not culture. For culture has got into new regions where I cannot enter, and, what is perhaps worse, I find myself delighting in a great many things which are under the ban of culture.

He confesses that this is a dreadful position; one that makes a man feel like one of those Liberal politicians who are always "sitting on the fence," and who follow their party, if follow it they do, with the reluctant acquiescence of the prophet's donkey. He further confesses that he has tried Hartmann and prefers Plato, that he is shaky about Blake, though stalwart concerning Rudyard Kipling.

This is not the worst of it. Culture has hardly a new idol but I long to hurl things at it. Culture can scarcely burn anything, but I am impelled to sacrifice to that same. I am coming to suspect that the majority of culture's modern disciples are a mere crowd of very slimly educated people who have no natural taste or impulses; who do not really know the best things in literature; who have a feverish desire to admire the newest thing, to follow the latest artistic fashion; who prate about "style," without the faintest acquaintance with the ancient examples of style in Greek, French, or English; who talk about the classics and criticize the classical critics and poets, without being able to read a line of them in the original. Nothing of the natural man is left in these people; their intellectual equipment is made up of ignorant vanity and eager desire for novelty, and a yearning to be in the fashion. Take, for example—and we have been a long time in coming to him—Mark Twain. [Here follow some observations concerning the *Yankee*, which Lang

confesses that he has not read, and has abstained from reading because—]. Here Mark Twain is not, and cannot be, at the proper point of view. He has not the knowledge which would enable him to be a sound critic of the ideals of the Middle Ages. An Arthurian Knight in New York or in Washington would find as much to blame, and justly, as a Yankee at Camelot.

Of Mark Twain's work in general he speaks with another conclusion:

Mark Twain is a benefactor beyond most modern writers, and the cultured who do not laugh are merely to be pitied. But his art is not only that of the maker of the scarce article—mirth. I have no hesitation in saying that Mark Twain is one among the greatest contemporary makers of fiction. . . . I can never forget or be ungrateful for the exquisite pleasure with which I read *Huckleberry Finn* for the first time years ago. I read it again last night, deserting *Kenilworth* for *Huck*. I never laid it down till I had finished it. I perused several passages more than once, and rose from it with a higher opinion of its merits than ever.

What is it that we want in a novel? We want a vivid and original picture of life; we want character naturally displayed in action; and if we get the excitement of adventure into the bargain, and that adventure possible and plausible, I so far differ from the newest school of criticism as to think that we have additional cause for gratitude. If, moreover, there is an unstrained sense of humor in the narrator we have a masterpiece, and *Huckleberry Finn* is nothing less.

He reviews *Huck* sympathetically in detail, and closes:

There are defects of taste, or passages that to us seem deficient in taste, but the book remains a nearly flawless gem of romance and of humor. The world appreciates it, no doubt, but "cultured critics" are probably unaware of its singular value. The great American novel has escaped the eyes of those who watch to see this new planet swim into their ken. And will Mark Twain never write such another? One is enough for him to live by, and for our gratitude, but not enough for our desire.

In the brief column and a half which it occupies, this comment of Andrew Lang's constitutes as thoughtful and fair an estimate of Mark Twain's work as was ever written.

W. T. Stead, of the *Review of Reviews*, was about the only prominent English editor to approve of the *Yankee* and to exploit its merits. Stead brought down obloquy upon himself by so doing, and his separation from his business partner would seem to have been at least remotely connected with this heresy.

The *Yankee in King Arthur's Court* was dramatized in America by Howard Taylor, one of the *Enterprise* compositors, whom Clemens had known in the old Comstock days. Taylor had become a playwright of considerable success, with a number of well-known actors and actresses starring in his plays. The *Yankee*, however, did not find a manager, or at least it seems not to have reached the point of production.

CLXXIII

A SUMMER AT ONTEORA

WITH the exception of one article—"A Majestic Literary Fossil"[1] —Clemens was writing nothing of importance at this time. This article grew out of a curious old medical work containing absurd prescriptions which, with Theodore Crane, he had often laughed over at the farm. A sequel to *Huckleberry Finn—Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer Among the Indians*—was begun, and a number of its chapters were set in type on the new Paige compositor, which had cost such a gallant sum, and was then thought to be complete. There seems to have been a plan to syndicate the story, but at the end of Chapter IX Huck and Tom had got themselves into a predicament from which it seemed impossible to extricate them, and the plot was suspended for further inspiration, which apparently never came.

Clemens, in fact, was troubled with rheumatism in his arm and shoulder, which made writing difficult. Mrs. Clemens, too, had twinges of the malady. They planned to go abroad for the summer of 1890, to take the waters of some of the German baths, but they were obliged to give up the idea. There were too many business complications; also the health of Clemens's mother had become very feeble. They went to Tannersville, in the Catskills, instead—to the Onteora Club, where Mrs. Candace Wheeler had gathered a congenial colony in a number of

[1] *Harper's Magazine*, February, 1890. Included in the "Complete Works."

picturesque cottages, with a comfortable hotel for the more transient visitor. The Clemenses secured a cottage for the season. Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge, Laurence Hutton, Carroll Beckwith, the painter; Brander Matthews, Dr. Heber Newton, Mrs. Custer, and Dora Wheeler were among those who welcomed Mark Twain and his family at a generous home-made banquet.

It was the beginning of a happy summer. There was a constant visiting from one cottage to another, with frequet assemblings at the Bear and Fox Inn, their general headquarters. There were pantomimes and charades, in which Mark Twain and his daughters always had star parts. Susy Clemens, who was now eighteen, brilliant and charming, was beginning to rival her father as a leader of entertainment. Her sister Clara gave impersonations of Modjeska and Ada Rehan. When Fourth of July came there were burlesque races, of which Mark Twain was starter, and many of that light-hearted company took part. Sometimes, in the evening, they gathered in one of the cottages and told stories by the firelight, and once he told the story of the Golden Arm, so long remembered, and brought them up with the same old jump at the sudden climax. Brander Matthews remembers that Clemens was obliged frequently to go to New York on business connected with the machine and the publishing, and that during one of these absences a professional entertainer came along, and in the course of his program told a Mark Twain story, at which Mrs. Clemens and the girls laughed without recognizing its authorship. Matthews also remembers Jean, as a little girl of ten, allowed to ride a pony and to go barefoot, to her great delight, full of health and happiness, a favorite of the colony.

Clemens would seem to have forgiven Brander Matthews for his copyright articles, for he walked over to the Matthews cottage one morning and asked to be taught

piquet, the card game most in vogue there that season. At odd times he sat to Carroll Beckwith for his portrait, and smoked a cob pipe meantime, so Beckwith painted him in that way.

It was a season that closed sadly. Clemens was called to Keokuk in August, to his mother's bedside, for it was believed that her end was near. She rallied, and he returned to Onteora. But on the 27th of October came the close of that long, active life, and the woman who two generations before had followed John Clemens into the wilderness, and along the path of vicissitude, was borne by her children to Hannibal and laid to rest at his side. She was in her eighty-eighth year.

The Clemens family were back in Hartford by this time, and it was only a little later that Mrs. Clemens was summoned to the death-bed of her own mother, in Elmira. Clemens accompanied her, but Jean being taken suddenly ill he returned to Hartford. Watching by the little girl's bedside on the night of the 27th of November, he wrote Mrs. Clemens a birthday letter, telling of Jean's improved condition and sending other good news and as many loving messages as he could devise. But it proved a sad birthday for Mrs. Clemens, for on that day her mother's gentle and beautiful soul went out from among them. The foreboding she had felt at the passing of Theodore Crane had been justified. She had a dread that the harvest of death was not yet ended. Matters in general were going badly with them, and an anxiety began to grow to get away from America, and so perhaps leave sorrow and ill-luck behind. Clemens, near the end of December, writing to his publishing manager, Hall, said:

> Merry Christmas to you, and I wish to God I could have one myself before I die.

The house was emptier that winter than before, for Susy was at Bryn Mawr. Clemens planned some literary

work, but the beginning, after his long idleness, was hard. A diversion was another portrait of himself, this time undertaken by Charles Noel Flagg. Clemens rather enjoyed portrait-sittings. He could talk and smoke, and he could incidentally acquire information. He liked to discuss any man's profession with him, and in his talks with Flagg he made a sincere effort to get that insight which would enable him to appreciate the old masters. Flagg found him a tractable sitter, and a most interesting one. Once he paid him a compliment, then apologized for having said the obvious thing.

"Never mind the apology," said Clemens. "The compliment that helps us on our way is not the one that is shut up in the mind, but the one that is spoken out."

When Flagg's portrait was about completed, Mrs. Clemens and Mrs. Crane came to the studio to look at it. Mrs. Clemens complained only that the necktie was crooked.

"But it's always crooked," said Flagg, "and I have a great fancy for the line it makes."

She straightened it on Clemens himself, but it immediately became crooked again. Clemens said:

"If you were to make that necktie straight people would say, 'Good portrait, but there is something the matter with it. I don't know where it is.'"

The tie was left unchanged.

CLXXIV

THE MACHINE

THE reader may have realized that by the beginning of 1891 Mark Twain's finances were in a critical condition. The publishing business had managed to weather along. It was still profitable, and could have been made much more so if the capital necessary to its growth had not been continuously and relentlessly absorbed by that gigantic vampire of inventions—that remorseless Frankenstein monster—the machine.

The beginning of this vast tragedy (for it was no less than that) dated as far back as 1880, when Clemens one day had taken a minor and purely speculative interest in patent rights, which was to do away with setting type by hand. In some memoranda which he made more than ten years later, when the catastrophe was still a little longer postponed, he gave some account of the matter.

This episode has now spread itself over more than one-fifth of my life, a considerable stretch of time, as I am now 55 years old.

Ten or eleven years ago Dwight Buell, a jeweler, called at our house and was shown up to the billiard-room—which was my study; and the game got more study than the other sciences. He wanted me to take some stock in a type-setting machine. He said it was at the Colt's Arms factory, and was about finished. I took $2,000 of the stock. I was always taking little chances like that, and almost always losing by it, too. Some time afterward I was invited to go down to the factory and see the machine. I went, promising myself nothing, for I knew all

about type-setting by practical experience, and held the settled and solidified opinion that a successful type-setting machine was an impossibility, for the reason that a machine cannot be made to *think*, and the thing that sets movable type *must* think or retire defeated. So, the performance I witnessed did most thoroughly amaze me. Here was a machine that was really setting type, and doing it with swiftness and accuracy, too. Moreover, it was distributing its case at the same time. The distribution was automatic; the machine fed itself from a galley of dead matter and without human help or suggestion, for it began its work of its own accord when the type channels needed filling, and stopped of its own accord when they were full enough. The machine was almost a complete compositor; it lacked but one feature—it did not "justify" the lines. This was done by the operator's assistant.

I saw the operator set at the rate of 3,000 ems an hour, which, counting distribution, was but little short of four casemen's work. William Hamersley was there. He said he was already a considerable owner, and was going to take as much more of the stock as he could afford. Wherefore, I set down my name for an additional $3,000. It is here that the music begins.

It was the so-called Farnham machine that he saw, invented by James W. Paige, and if they had placed it on the market then, without waiting for the inventor to devise improvements, the story might have been a different one. But Paige was never content short of absolute perfection—a machine that was not only partly human, but entirely so. Clemens used to say later that the Paige type-setter would do everything that a human being could do except drink and swear and go on a strike. He might properly have omitted the last item, but of that—later. Paige was a small, bright-eyed, alert, smartly dressed man, with a crystal-clear mind, but a dreamer and a visionary. Clemens says of him: "He is a poet; a most great and genuine poet, whose sublime creations are written in steel."

It is easy to see now that Mark Twain and Paige did not make a good business combination. When Paige

declared that, wonderful as the machine was, he could do vastly greater things with it, make it worth many more and much larger fortunes by adding this attachment and that, Clemens was just the man to enter into his dreams and to furnish the money to realize them. Paige did not require much money at first, and on the capital already invested he tinkered along with his improvements for something like four or five years; Hamersley and Clemens meantime capitalizing the company and getting ready to place the perfected invention on the market. By the time the Grant episode had ended Clemens had no reason to believe but that incalculable wealth lay just ahead, when the newspapers should be apprised of the fact that their types were no longer to be set by hand. Several contracts had been made with Paige, and several new attachments had been added to the machine. It seemed to require only one thing more, the justifier, which would save the labor of the extra man. Paige could be satisfied with nothing short of that, even though the extra man's wage was unimportant. He must have his machine *do it all*, and meantime five precious years had slipped away. Clemens, in his memoranda, says:

End of 1885. Paige arrives at my house unheralded. I had seen little or nothing of him for a year or two. He said:

"What will you complete the machine for?"

"What will it cost?"

"Twenty thousand dollars; certainly not over $30,000."

"What will you give?"

"I'll give you half."

Clemens was "flush" at this time. His reading tour with Cable, the great sale of *Huck Finn*, the prospect of the Grant book, were rosy realities. He said:

"I'll do it, but the limit must be $30,000."

They agreed to allow Hamersley a tenth interest for the money he had already invested and for legal advice.

Hamersley consented readily enough, and when in February, 1886, the new contract was drawn they believed themselves heir to the millions of the Fourth Estate.

By this time F. G. Whitmore had come into Clemens's business affairs, and he did not altogether approve of the new contract. Among other things, it required that Clemens should not only complete the machine, but promote it, capitalize it commercially. Whitmore said:

"Mr. Clemens, that clause can bankrupt you."

Clemens answered: "Never mind that, Whitmore; I've considered that. I can get a thousand men worth a million apiece to go in with me if I can get a perfect machine."

He immediately began to calculate the number of millions he would be worth presently when the machine was completed and announced to the waiting world. He covered pages with figures that never ran short of millions, and frequently approached the billion mark. Colonel Sellers in his happiest moments never dreamed more lavishly. He obtained a list of all the newspapers in the United States and in Europe, and he counted up the machines that would be required by each. To his nephew, Sam Moffett, visiting him one day, he declared that it would take ten men to count the profits from the typesetter. He realized clearly enough that a machine which would set and distribute type and do the work of half a dozen men or more would revolutionize type composition. The fact that other inventors besides Paige were working quite as diligently and perhaps toward more simple conclusions did not disturb him. Rumors came of the Rogers machine and the Thorne machine and the Mergenthaler linotype, but Mark Twain only smiled. When the promoters of the Mergenthaler offered to exchange half their interests for a half interest in the Paige patent, to obtain thereby a wider insurance of success, it only confirmed his trust, and he let the golden opportunity go by.

Clemens thinks the thirty thousand dollars lasted about

a year. Then Paige confessed that the machine was still incomplete, but he said that four thousand dollars more would finish it, and that with ten thousand dollars he could finish it and give a big exhibition in New York. He had discarded the old machine altogether, it seems, and at Pratt & Whitney's shops was building a new one from the ground up—a machine of twenty thousand minutely exact parts, each of which must be made by expert hand workmanship after elaborate drawings and patterns even more expensive. It was an undertaking for a millionaire.

Paige offered to borrow from Clemens the amount needed, offering the machine as security. Clemens supplied the four thousand dollars, and continued to advance money from time to time at the rate of three to four thousand dollars a month, until he had something like eighty thousand dollars invested, with the machine still unfinished. This would be early in 1888, by which time other machines had reached a state of completion and were being placed on the market. The Mergenthaler, in particular, was attracting wide attention. Paige laughed at it, and Clemens, too, regarded it as a joke. The moment their machine was complete all other machines would disappear. Even the fact that the *Tribune* had ordered twenty-three of the linotypes, and other journals were only waiting to see the paper in its new dress before ordering, did not disturb them. Those linotypes would all go into the scrap-heap presently. It was too bad people would waste their money so. In January, 1888, Paige promised that the machine would be done by the 1st of April. On the 1st of April he promised it for September, but in October he acknowledged there were still eighty-five days' work to be done on it. In November Clemens wrote to Orion:

> The machine is apparently almost done—*but* I take no privileges on that account; it must *be* done before I spend a cent that can be avoided. I have kept this family on very short commons

for two years and they must go on scrimping until the machine is finished, no matter how long that may be.

By the end of '88 the income from the books and the business and Mrs. Clemens's Elmira investments no longer satisfied the demands of the type-setter, in addition to the household expense, reduced though the latter was; and Clemens began by selling and hypothecating his marketable securities. The whole household interest by this time centered in the machine. What the Tennessee land had been to John and Jane Clemens and their children, the machine had now become to Samuel Clemens and his family. "When the machine is finished everything will be all right again" afforded the comfort of that long-ago sentence, "When the Tennessee land is sold."

They would have everything they wanted then. Mrs. Clemens planned benefactions, as was her wont. Once she said to her sister:

"How strange it will seem to have unlimited means, to be able to do whatever you want to do, to give whatever you want to give without counting the cost."

Straight along through another year the three thousand dollars and more a month continued, and then on the 5th of January, 1889, there came what seemed the end—the machine and justifier were complete! In his notebook on that day Mark Twain set down this memorandum:

EUREKA!

Saturday, January 5, 1889—12.20 P.M. At this moment I have seen a line of movable type *spaced and justified by machinery!* This is the first time in the history of the world that this amazing thing has ever been done. Present:

J. W. Paige, the inventor;
Charles Davis, Earll, Graham { Mathematical assistants & mechanical experts
Bates, foreman, and S. L. Clemens.

This record is made immediately after the prodigious event.

Two days later he made another note:

Monday, January 7—4.45 P.M. The first proper name ever set by this new keyboard was William Shakspeare. I set it at the above hour; & I perceive, now that I see the name written, that I either mis-spelled it then or I've mis-spelled it now.

The space-bar did its duty by the electric connections & steam & separated the two words preparatory to the reception of the space.

It seemed to him that his troubles were at an end. He wrote overflowing letters, such as long ago he had written about his first mining claims, to Orion and to other members of the family and to friends in America and Europe. One of these letters, written to George Standring, a London printer and publisher, also an author, will serve as an example.

The machine is finished! An hour and forty minutes ago a line of movable type was spaced and justified by machinery for the first time in the history of the world. And I was there to see.

That was the final function. I had before seen the machine set type, automatically, and distribute type, and automatically distribute its eleven different thicknesses of spaces. So now I have seen the machine, operated by one individual, do the whole thing, and do it a deal better than any man at the case can do it.

This is by far and away the most marvelous invention ever contrived by man. And it is not a thing of rags and patches; it is made of massive steel, and will last a century.

She will do the work of six men, and do it better than any six men that ever stood at a case.

The death-warrant of all other type-setting machines in this world was signed at 12.20 this afternoon, when that first line was shot through this machine and came out perfectly spaced and justified. And automatically, mind you.

There was a speck of invisible dirt on one of those nonpareil types. Well, the machine allowed for that by inserting of its own accord a space which was the 5-1,000 of an inch thinner than

it would have used if the dirt had been absent. But when I send you the details you will see that that's nothing for this machine to do; you'll see that it knows more and has got more brains than all the printers in the world put together.

His letter to Orion was more technical, also more jubilant. At the end he said:

All the witnesses made written record of the immense historical birth—the first justification of a line of movable type by machinery—& also set down the hour and the minute. Nobody had drank anything, & yet everybody seemed drunk. Well—dizzy, stupefied, stunned.

All the other wonderful inventions of the human brain sink pretty nearly into commonplaces contrasted with this awful mechanical miracle. Telephones, telegraphs, locomotives, cotton-gins, sewing-machines, Babbage calculators, Jacquard looms, perfecting presses, all mere toys, simplicities! The Paige Compositor marches alone and far in the land of human inventions.

In one paragraph of Orion's letter he refers to the machine as a "cunning devil, knowing more than any man that ever lived." That was a profound truth, though not as he intended it. That creation of James Paige's brain reflected all the ingenuity and elusiveness of its creator, and added something on its own account. It was discovered presently that it had a habit of breaking the types. Paige said it was a trifling thing: he could fix it, but it meant taking down the machine, and that deadly expense of three thousand or four thousand dollars a month for the band of workmen and experts in Pratt & Whitney's machine shops did not cease. In February the machine was again setting and justifying type "to a hair," and Whitmore's son, Fred, was running it at a rate of six thousand ems an hour, a rate of composition hitherto unknown in the history of the world. His speed was increased to eight thousand ems an hour by the end of the

year, and the machine was believed to have a capacity of eleven thousand. No type-setter invented to this day could match it for accuracy and precision when it was in perfect order, but its point of perfection was apparently a vanishing point. It would be just reached, when it would suddenly disappear, and Paige would discover other needed corrections. Once, when it was apparently complete as to every detail, and running like a human thing, with such important customers as the New York *Herald* and other great papers ready to place their orders, Paige suddenly discovered that it required some kind of an air-blast, and it was all taken down again and the air-blast, which required months to invent and perfect, was added.

But what is the use of remembering all these bitter details? The steady expense went on through another year, apparently increasing instead of diminishing, until, by the beginning of 1890, Clemens was finding it almost impossible to raise funds to continue the work. Still he struggled on. It was the old mining fascination—"a foot farther into the ledge and we shall strike the vein of gold."

He sent for Joe Goodman to come and help him organize a capital-stock company, in which Senator Jones and John Mackay, old Comstock friends, were to be represented. He never for a moment lost faith in the final outcome, and he believed that if they could build their own factory the delays and imperfections of construction would be avoided. Pratt & Whitney had been obliged to make all the parts by hand. With their own factory the new company would have vast and perfect machinery dedicated entirely to the production of type-setters.

Nothing short of two million dollars capitalization was considered, and Goodman made at least three trips from California to the East and labored with Jones and Mackay all that winter and at intervals during the following year, through which that "cunning devil," the machine, consumed its monthly four thousand dollars—money that

was the final gleanings and sweepings of every nook and corner of the strong-box and bank-account and savings of the Clemens family resources. With all of Mark Twain's fame and honors his life at this period was far from an enviable one. It was, in fact, a fevered delirium, often a veritable nightmare.

Reporters who approached him for interviews, little guessing what he was passing through, reported that Mark Twain's success in life had made him crusty and sour.

Goodman remembers that when they were in Washington, conferring with Jones, and had rooms at the Arlington, opening together, often in the night he would awaken to see a light burning in the next room and to hear Mark Twain's voice calling:

"Joe, are you awake?"

"Yes, Mark, what is it?"

"Oh, nothing, only I can't sleep. Won't you talk awhile? I know it's wrong to disturb you, but I am so d—d miserable that I can't help it."

Whereupon he would get up and talk and talk, and pace the floor and curse the delays until he had refreshed himself, and then perhaps wallow in millions until breakfast-time.

Jones and Mackay, deeply interested, were willing to put up a reasonable amount of money, but they were unable to see a profit in investing so large a capital in a plant for constructing the machines.

Clemens prepared estimates showing that the American business alone would earn thirty-five million dollars a year, and the European business twenty million dollars more. These dazzled, but they did not convince the capitalists. Jones was sincerely anxious to see the machine succeed, and made an engagement to come out to see it work, but a day or two before he was to come Paige was seized with an inspiration. The type-setter was all

in parts when the day came, and Jones's visit had to be postponed. Goodman wrote that the fatal delay had "sicklied o'er the bloom" of Jones's original enthusiasm.

Yet Clemens seems never to have been openly violent with Paige. In the memorandum which he completed about this time he wrote:

> Paige and I always meet on effusively affectionate terms, and yet he knows perfectly well that if I had him in a steel trap I would shut out all human succor and watch that trap until he died.

He was grabbing at straws now. He offered a twentieth or a hundredth or a thousandth part of the enterprise for varying sums, ranging from one thousand to one hundred thousand dollars. He tried to capitalize his advance (machine) royalties, and did dispose of a few of these; but when the money came in for them he was beset by doubts as to the final outcome, and though at his wit's ends for further funds, he returned the checks to the friends who had sent them. One five-thousand-dollar check from a friend named Arnot, in Elmira, went back by the next mail. He was willing to sacrifice his own last penny, but he could not take money from those who were blindly backing his judgment only and not their own. He still had faith in Jones, faith which lasted up to the 13th of February, 1891. Then came a final letter, in which Jones said that he had canvassed the situation thoroughly with such men as Mackay, Don Cameron, Whitney, and others, with the result that they would have nothing to do with the machine. Whitney and Cameron, he said, were large stockholders in the Mergenthaler. Jones put it more kindly and more politely than that, and closed by saying that there could be no doubt as to the machine's future—an ambiguous statement. A letter from young Hall came about the same time, urging a heavy increase of capital in the business. *The Library of American Literature*, its

leading feature, was handled on the instalment plan. The collections from this source were deferred driblets, while the bills for manufacture and promotion must be paid down in cash. Clemens realized that for the present at least the dream was ended. The family securities were exhausted. The book trade was dull; his book royalties were insufficient even to the demands of the household. He signed further notes to keep business going, left the matter of the machine in abeyance, and turned once more to the trade of authorship. He had spent in the neighborhood of one hundred and ninety thousand dollars on the typesetter—money that would better have been thrown into the Connecticut River, for then the agony had been more quickly over. As it was, it had shadowed many precious years.

CLXXV

"THE CLAIMANT"—LEAVING HARTFORD

FOR the first time in twenty years Mark Twain was altogether dependent on literature. He did not feel mentally unequal to the new problem; in fact, with his added store of experience, he may have felt himself more fully equipped for authorship than ever before. It had been his habit to write within his knowledge and observation. To a correspondent of this time he reviewed his stock in trade:

. . . I confine myself to life with which I am familiar when pretending to portray life. But I confined myself to the *boy*-life out on the Mississippi because that had a peculiar charm for me, and not because I was not familiar with other phases of life. I was a *soldier* two weeks once in the beginning of the war, and was hunted like a rat the whole time. Familiar? My splendid Kipling himself hasn't a more burnt-in, hard-baked, and unforgetable familiarity with that death-on-the-pale-horse-with-hell-following-after, which is a raw soldier's first fortnight in the field—and which, without any doubt, is the most tremendous fortnight and the vividest he is ever going to see.

Yes, and I have shoveled silver tailings in a quartz-mill a couple of weeks, and acquired the last possibilities of culture in *that* direction. And I've done "pocket-mining" during three months in the one little patch of ground in the whole globe where Nature conceals gold in pockets—or *did* before we robbed all of those pockets and exhausted, obliterated, annihilated the most curious freak Nature ever indulged in. There are not thirty men left alive who, being told there was a pocket hidden on the broad slope of a mountain, would know how to go and find it, or have

even the faintest idea of how to set about it; but I am one of the possible 20 or 30 who possess the secret, and I could go and put my hand on that hidden treasure with a most deadly precision.

And I've been a prospector, and know pay rock from poor when I find it—just with a touch of the tongue. And I've been a *silver* miner and know how to dig and shovel and drill and put in a blast. And so I know the mines and the miners interiorly as well as Bret Harte knows them exteriorly.

And I was a newspaper reporter four years in cities, and so saw the inside of many things; and was reporter in a legislature two sessions and the same in Congress one session, and thus learned to know personally three sample bodies of the smallest minds and the selfishest souls and the cowardliest hearts that God makes.

And I was some years a Mississippi pilot, and familiarly knew all the different kinds of steamboatmen—a race apart, and not like other folk.

And I was for some years a traveling "jour" printer, and wandered from city to city—and so I know *that* sect familiarly.

And I was a lecturer on the public platform a number of seasons and was a responder to toasts at all the different kinds of banquets—and so I know a great many secrets about audiences—secrets not to be got out of books, but only acquirable by experience.

And I watched over one dear project of mine for years, spent a fortune on it, and failed to make it go—and the history of that would make a large book in which a million men would see themselves as in a mirror; and they would testify and say, Verily, this is not imagination; this fellow has been there—and after would they cast dust upon their heads, cursing and blaspheming.

And I am a publisher, and did pay to one author's widow (General Grant's) the largest copyright checks this world has seen—aggregating more than £80,000 in the first year.

And I have been an author for 20 years and an ass for 55.

Now then: as the most valuable capital or culture or education usable in the building of novels is personal experience I ought to be well equipped for that trade.

I surely have the equipment, a wide culture, and all of it real, none of it artificial, for I don't know anything about books.

This generous bill of literary particulars was fully warranted. Mark Twain's equipment was equal to his occasions. It is true that he was no longer young, and that his health was not perfect, but his resolution and his energy had not waned.

His need was imminent and he lost no time. He dug out from his pigeonholes such materials as he had in stock, selecting a few completed manuscripts for immediate disposal—among them his old article entitled, "Mental Telegraphy," written in 1878, when he had hesitated to offer it, in the fear that it would not be accepted by the public otherwise than as a joke. He added to it now a supplement and sent it to Mr. Alden, of *Harper's Magazine*. Psychic interest had progressed in twelve years; also Mark Twain had come to be rather more seriously regarded. The article was accepted promptly.[1] The old sketch, "Luck," also found its way to *Harper's Magazine*, and other manuscripts were looked over and furbished up with a view to their disposal. Even the history game was dragged from the dust of its retirement, and Hall was instructed to investigate its chance of profit.

Then Mark Twain went to work in earnest. Within a week after the collapse of the Jones bubble he was hard at work on a new book—the transmigration of the old "Claimant" play into a novel.

Ever since the appearance of the *Yankee* there had been what was evidently a concerted movement to induce him to write a novel with the theories of Henry George as the central idea. Letters from every direction had urged him to undertake such a story, and these had suggested a more serious purpose for the *Claimant* book. A motif in which

[1] The publication of this article created a good deal of a stir and resulted in the first general recognition of what later became known as Telepathy. A good many readers insisted on regarding the whole matter as one of Mark Twain's jokes, but its serious acceptance was much wider.

there is a young lord who renounces his heritage and class to come to America and labor with his hands; who attends socialistic meetings at which men inspired by readings of *Progress and Poverty* and *Looking Backward* address their brothers of toil, could have in it something worth while. Clemens inserted portions of some of his discarded essays in these addresses, and had he developed this element further, and abandoned Colonel Sellers's materialization lunacies to the oblivion they had earned, the result might have been more fortunate.

But his faith in the new Sellers had never died, and the temptation to use scenes from the abandoned play proved to be too strong to be resisted. The result was incongruous enough. The author, however, admired it amazingly at the time. He sent Howells stirring reports of his progress. He wrote Hall that the book would be ready soon and that there must be seventy-five thousand orders by the date of issue, "not a single one short of that." Then suddenly, at the end of February, the rheumatism came back into his shoulder and right arm and he could hardly hold the pen. He conceived the idea of dictating into a phonograph, and wrote Howells to test this invention and find out as to terms for three months, with cylinders enough to carry one hundred and seventy-five thousand words.

I don't want to erase any of them. My right arm is nearly disabled by rheumatism, but I am bound to write this book (and sell 100,000 copies of it—no, I mean 1,000,000—next fall). I feel sure I can dictate the book into a phonograph if I don't have to yell. I write 2,000 words a day. I think I can dictate twice as many.

But mind, if this is going to be too much trouble to you—go ahead and do it all the same.

Howells replied encouragingly. He had talked a letter into a phonograph and the phonograph man had talked

his answer into it, after which the cylinder had been taken to a typewriter in the next room and correctly written out. If a man had the "cheek" to dictate his story into a phonograph, Howells said, all the rest seemed perfectly easy.

Clemens ordered a phonograph and gave it a pretty fair trial. It was only a partial success. He said he couldn't write literature with it because it hadn't any ideas or gift for elaboration, but was just as matter-of-fact, compressive and unresponsive, grave and unsmiling as the devil—a poor audience.

> I filled four dozen cylinders in two sittings, then I found I could have said it about as easy with the pen, and said it a deal better. Then I resigned.

He did not immediately give it up. To relieve his aching arm he alternated the phonograph with the pen, and the work progressed rapidly. Early in May he was arranging for its serial disposition, and it was eventually sold for twelve thousand dollars to the McClure Syndicate, who placed it with a number of papers in America and with the *Idler Magazine* in England. W. M. Laffan, of the *Sun*, an old and tried friend, combined with McClure in the arrangement. Laffan also proposed to join with McClure in paying Mark Twain a thousand dollars each for a series of six European letters. This was toward the end of May, 1891, when Clemens had already decided upon a long European sojourn.

There were several reasons why this was desirable. Neither Clemens nor his wife was in good health. Both of them were troubled with rheumatism, and a council of physicians had agreed that Mrs. Clemens had some disturbance of the heart. The death of Charles L. Webster in April—the fourth death among relatives in two years—had renewed her forebodings. Susy, who had been

at Bryn Mawr, had returned far from well. The European baths and the change of travel it was believed would be beneficial to the family health. Furthermore, the maintenance of the Hartford home was far too costly for their present and prospective income. The house with its associations of seventeen incomparable years must be closed. A great period had ended.

They arranged to sail on the 6th of June by the French line.[1] Mrs. Crane was to accompany them, and came over in April to help in breaking the news to the servants. John and Ellen O'Neill (the gardener and his wife) were to remain in charge; places were found for George and Patrick. Katie Leary was retained to accompany the family. It was a sad dissolution.

The day came for departure and the carriage was at the door. Mrs. Clemens did not come immediately. She was looking into the rooms, bidding a kind of silent good-by to the home she had made and to all its memories. Following the others she entered the carriage, and Patrick McAleer drove them together for the last time. They were going on a long journey. They did not guess how long, or that the place would never be home to them again.

[1] On the *Gascogne*.

CLXXVI

A EUROPEAN SUMMER

THEY landed at Havre and went directly to Paris, where they remained about a week. From Paris Clemens wrote to Hall that a deal by which he had hoped to sell out his interest in the type-setter to the Mallorys, of the *Churchman*, had fallen through.

"Therefore," he said, "you will have to modify your instalment system to meet the emergency of a constipated purse; for if you should need to borrow any more money I would not know how or where to raise it."

The Clemens party went to Geneva, then rested for a time at the baths of Aix; from Aix to Bayreuth to attend the Wagner festival, and from Bayreuth to Marienbad for further additions of health. Clemens began writing his newspaper letters at Aix, the first of which consists of observations at that "paradise of rheumatics." This letter is really a careful and faithful description of Aix-les-Bains, with no particular drift of humor in it. He tells how in his own case the baths at first developed plenty of pain, but that the subsequent ones removed almost all of it.

"I've got back the use of my arm the last few days, and I am going away now," he says, and concludes by describing the beautiful drives and scenery about Aix—the pleasures to be found paddling on little Lake Bourget and the happy excursions to Annecy.

At the end of an hour you come to Annecy and rattle through its old crooked lanes, built solidly up with curious old houses

that are a dream of the Middle Ages, and presently you come to the main object of your trip—Lake Annecy. It is a revelation. It is a miracle. It brings the tears to a body's eyes. It is so enchanting. That is to say, it affects you just as all other things that you instantly recognize as perfect affect you—perfect music, perfect eloquence, perfect art, perfect joy, perfect grief.

He was getting back into his old descriptive swing, but his dislike for travel was against him, and he found writing the letters hard. From Bayreuth he wrote "At the Shrine of St. Wagner," one of the best descriptions of that great musical festival that has been put into words. He paid full tribute to the performance, also to the Wagner devotion, confessing its genuineness.

This opera of "Tristan und Isolde" last night broke the hearts of all witnesses who were of the faith, and I know of some, and have heard of many, who could not sleep after it, but cried the night away. I feel strongly out of place here. Sometimes I feel like the one sane person in the community of the mad; sometimes I feel like the one blind man where all others see; the one groping savage in the college of the learned, and always during service I feel like a heretic in heaven.

He tells how he really enjoyed two of the operas, and rejoiced in supposing that his musical regeneration was accomplished and perfected; but alas! he was informed by experts that those particular events were not real music at all. Then he says:

Well, I ought to have recognized the sign—the old, sure sign that has never failed me in matters of art. Whenever I enjoy anything in art it means that it is mighty poor. The private knowledge of this fact has saved me from going to pieces with enthusiasm in front of many and many a chromo. However, my base instinct does bring me profit sometimes; I was the only man out of 3,200 who got his money back on those two operas.

His third letter was from Marienbad, in Bohemia, another "health-factory," as he calls it, and is of the same general character as those preceding. In his fourth letter he told how he himself took charge of the family fortunes and became courier from Aix to Bayreuth. It is a very entertaining letter, most of it, and probably not greatly burlesqued or exaggerated in its details. It is included now in the "Complete Works," as fresh and delightful as ever. They returned to Germany at the end of August, to Nuremberg, which he notes as the "city of exquisite glimpses," and to Heidelberg, where they had their old apartment of thirteen years before, Room 40 at the Schloss Hotel, with its wonderful prospect of wood and hill, and the haze-haunted valley of the Rhine. They remained less than a week in that beautiful place, and then were off for Switzerland, Lucerne, Brienz, Interlaken, finally resting at the Hôtel Beau Rivage, Ouchy, Lausanne, on beautiful Lake Leman.

Clemens had agreed to write six of the newspaper letters, and he had by this time finished five of them, the fifth being dated from Interlaken, its subject, "Switzerland, the Cradle of Liberty." He wrote to Hall that it was his intention to write another book of travel and to take a year or two to collect the material. The *Century* editors were after him for a series after the style of *Innocents Abroad*. He considered this suggestion, but declined by cable, explaining to Hall that he intended to write for serial publication no more than the six newspaper letters. He said:

> To write a book of travel would be less trouble than to write six detached chapters. Each of these letters requires the same variety of treatment and subject that one puts into a book; but in the book each chapter doesn't have to be rounded and complete in itself.

He suggested that the six letters be gathered into a small volume which would contain about thirty-five

or forty thousand words, to be sold as low as twenty-five cents, but this idea appears to have been dropped.

At Ouchy Clemens conceived the idea of taking a little trip on his own account, an excursion that would be a rest after the strenuous three months' travel and sight-seeing—one that he could turn into literature. He engaged Joseph Very, a courier used during their earlier European travels, and highly recommended in the *Tramp Abroad*. He sent Joseph over to Lake Bourget to engage a boat and a boatman for a ten days' trip down the river Rhone. For five dollars Joseph bought a safe, flat-bottom craft; also he engaged the owner as pilot. A few days later—September 19—Clemens followed. They stopped overnight on an island in Lake Bourget, and in his notes Clemens tells how he slept in the old castle of Châtillon, in the room where a pope was born. They started on their drift next morning. To Mrs. Clemens, in some good-by memoranda, he said:

The lake is as smooth as glass; a brilliant sun is shining. Our boat is so comfortable and shady with its awning.

11.20. We have crossed the lake and are entering the canal. Shall presently be in the Rhone.

Noon. Nearly down to the Rhone, passing the village of Chanaz.

Sunday, 3.15 P.M. We have been in the Rhone three hours. It is unimaginably still & reposeful & cool & soft & breezy. No rowing or work of any kind to do—we merely float with the current—we glide noiseless and swift—as fast as a London cab-horse rips along—8 miles an hour—the swiftest current I've ever boated in. We have the entire river to ourselves—nowhere a boat of any kind.

Pleasant it must have been in the warm September days to go swinging down that swift, gray stream which comes racing out of Switzerland into France, fed from a thousand glaciers. He sent almost daily memoranda of his progress. Half-way to Arles he wrote:

It's too delicious, floating with the swift current under the awning these superb, sunshiny days in deep peace and quietness.

Some of these curious old historical towns strangely persuade me, but it is so lovely afloat that I don't stop, but view them from the outside and sail on. We get abundance of grapes and peaches for next to nothing. My, but that inn was suffocating with garlic where we stayed last night! I had to hold my nose as we went up-stairs or I believe I should have fainted.

Little bit of a room, rude board floor unswept, 2 chairs, unpainted white pine table—*voilà* the furniture! Had a good firm bed, solid as a rock, & you could have brained an ox with the bolster.

These six hours have been entirely delightful. I want to do all the rivers of Europe in an open boat in summer weather.

Still further along he described one of their shore accommodations.

Night caught us yesterday where we had to take quarters in a peasant's house which was occupied by the family and a lot of cows & calves, also several rabbits.[1] The latter had a ball & I was the ballroom; but they were very friendly and didn't bite.

The peasants were mighty kind and hearty & flew around & did their best to make us comfortable. This morning I breakfasted on the shore in the open air with two sociable dogs & a cat. Clean cloth, napkins & table furniture, white sugar, a vast hunk of excellent butter, good bread, first-class coffee with pure milk, fried fish just caught. Wonderful that so much cleanliness should come out of such a phenomenally dirty house.

An hour ago we saw the Falls of the Rhone, a prodigiously rough and dangerous-looking place; shipped a little water, but came to no harm. It was one of the most beautiful pieces of piloting & boat management I ever saw. Our admiral knew his business.

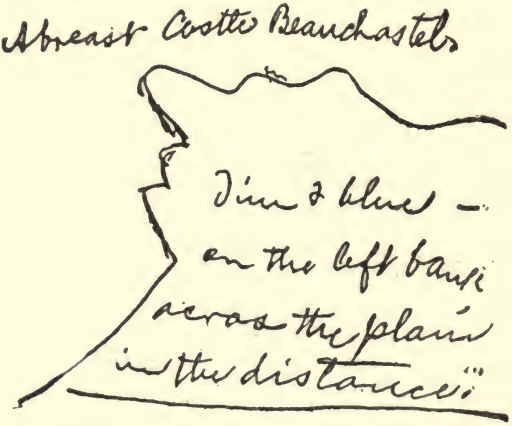
We have had to run ashore for shelter every time it has rained heretofore, but Joseph has been putting in his odd time making a waterproof sun-bonnet for the boat, & now we sail along dry, although we have had many heavy showers this morning.

Here follows a pencil-drawing of the boat and its new awning, and he adds: "I'm on the stern seat, under the shelter, and out of sight."

[1] His word for fleas. Neither fleas nor mosquitoes ever bit him —probably because of his steady use of tobacco.

The trip down the Rhone proved more valuable as an outing than as literary material. Clemens covered one hundred and seventy-four pages with his notes of it, then gave it up. Traveling alone with no one but Joseph and the Admiral (former owner of the craft) was reposeful and satisfactory, but it did not inspire literary flights. He tried to rectify the lack of companionship by introducing fictitious characters, such as Uncle Abner, Fargo, and Stavely, a young artist; also Harris, from the *Tramp Abroad;* but Harris was not really there this time, and Mark Twain's genius, given rather to elaboration than to construction, found it too severe a task to imagine a string of adventures without at least the customary ten per cent. of fact to build upon.

It was a day above Avignon that he had an experience worth while. They were abreast of an old castle, nearing a village, one of the huddled jumbles of houses of that locality, when, glancing over his left shoulder toward the distant mountain range, he received what he referred to



THE LOST NAPOLEON: SKETCH IN NOTE-BOOK

later as a soul-stirring shock. Pointing to the outline of the distant range he said to the courier:

"Name it. Who is it?"

The courier said, "Napoleon."

Clemens assented. The Admiral, when questioned, also promptly agreed that the mountain outlined was none other than the reclining figure of the great commander himself. They watched and discussed the phenomenon until they reached the village. Next morning Clemens was up for a first daybreak glimpse of his discovery. Later he reported it to Mrs. Clemens:

I did so long for you and Sue yesterday morning—the most superb sunrise—the most marvelous sunrise—& I saw it *all*, from the very faintest suspicion of the coming dawn, all the way through to the final explosion of glory. But it had an interest private to itself & not to be found elsewhere in the world; for between me & it, in the far-distant eastward, was a silhouetted mountain range, in which I had discovered, the previous afternoon, a most noble face upturned to the sky, & mighty form outstretched, which I had named Napoleon Dreaming of Universal Empire—& now this prodigious face, soft, rich, blue, spirituelle, asleep, tranquil, reposeful, lay *against* that giant conflagration of ruddy and golden splendors, all rayed like a wheel with the upstreaming & far-reaching lances of the sun. It made one want to cry for delight, it was so supreme in its unimaginable majesty & beauty.

He made a pencil-sketch of the Napoleon head in his note-book, and stated that the apparition could be seen opposite the castle of Beauchastel; but in later years his treacherous memory betrayed him, and, forgetting these identifying marks, he told of it as lying a few hours above Arles, and named it the "Lost Napoleon," because those who set out to find it did not succeed. He even wrote an article upon the subject, in which he urged tourists to take steamer from Arles and make a short trip upstream, keeping watch on the right-hand bank, with the purpose of rediscovering the natural wonder. Fortunately

this sketch was not published. It would have been set down as a practical joke by disappointed travelers. One of Mark Twain's friends, Mr. Theodore Stanton, made a persistent effort to find the Napoleon, but with the wrong directions naturally failed.

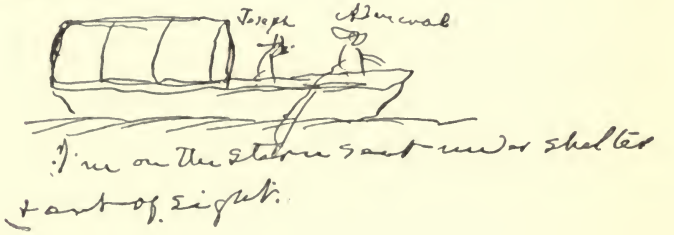
It required ten days to float to Arles. Then the current gave out and Clemens ended the excursion and returned to Lausanne by rail. He said:

"It was twenty-eight miles to Marseilles, and somebody would have to row. That would not have been pleasure; it would have meant work for the sailor, and I do not like work even when another person does it."

To Twichell in America he wrote:

You ought to have been along—I could have made room for you easily, & you would have found that a pedestrian tour in Europe doesn't begin with a raft voyage for hilarity & mild adventure & intimate contact with the unvisited native of the back settlements & extinction from the world and newspapers & a conscience in a state of coma & lazy comfort & solid happiness. In fact, there's *nothing* that's so lovely.

But it's all over. I gave the raft away yesterday at Arles & am loafing along back by short stages on the rail to Ouchy, Lausanne, where the tribe are staying at the Beau Rivage and are well and prosperous.



CLXXVII

KÖRNERSTRASSE, 7

THEY had decided to spend the winter in Berlin, and in October Mrs. Clemens and Mrs. Crane, after some previous correspondence with an agent, went up to that city to engage an apartment. The elevator had not reached the European apartment in those days, and it was necessary, on Mrs. Clemens's account, to have a ground floor. The sisters searched a good while without success, and at last reached Körnerstrasse, a short, secluded street, highly recommended by the agent. The apartment they examined in Körnerstrasse was Number 7, and they were so much pleased with the conveniences and comfort of it and so tired that they did not notice closely its general social environment. The agent supplied an assortment of furniture for a consideration, and they were soon settled in the attractive, roomy place. Clemens and the children, arriving somewhat later, expressed themselves as satisfied.

Their contentment was somewhat premature. When they began to go out socially, which was very soon, and friends inquired as to their location, they noticed that the address produced a curious effect. Semi-acquaintances said, "Ah, yes, Körnerstrasse"; acquaintances said, "Dear me, do you like it?" An old friend exclaimed, "Good gracious! How in the world did you ever come to locate there?" Then they began to notice what they had not at first seen. Körnerstrasse was not disreputable, but it certainly was not elegant. There were rag warehouses across the street and women who leaned out the windows

to gossip. The street itself was thronged with children. They played on a sand pile and were often noisy and seldom clean. It was eminently not the place for a distinguished man of letters. The family began to be sensitive on the subject of their address.

Clemens, of course, made humor out of it. He wrote a newspaper letter on the subject, a burlesque, naturally, which the family prevailed upon him not to print. But the humiliation is out of it now, and a bit of its humor may be preserved. He takes upon himself the renting of the place, and pictures the tour of inspection with the agent's assistant.

He was greatly moved when they came to the street and said, softly and lovingly:

"Ah, Körner Street, Körner Street, why did I not think of you before! A place fit for the gods, dear sir. Quiet?—notice how still it is; and remember this is noonday—noonday. It is but one block long, you see, just a sweet, dear little nest hid away here in the heart of the great metropolis, its presence and its sacred quiet unsuspected by the restless crowds that swarm along the stately thoroughfares yonder at its two extremities. And—"

"This building is handsome, but I don't think much of the others. They look pretty commonplace, compared with the rest of Berlin."

"Dear! dear! have you noticed that? It is just an affectation of the nobility. What they want—"

"The nobility? Do they live in—"

"In this street? That is good! very good, indeed! I wish the Duke of Sassafras-Hagenstein could hear you say that. When the Duke first moved in here he—"

"Does he live in this street?"

"Him! Well, I should say so! Do you see the big, plain house over there with the placard in the third-floor window? That's his house."

"The placard that says 'Furnished rooms to let'? Does he keep boarders?"

"What an idea! Him! With a rent-roll of twelve hundred thousand marks a year? Oh, positively this is too good."

"Well, what does he have that sign up for?"

The assistant took me by the buttonhole & said, with a merry light beaming in his eye:

"Why, my dear sir, a person would know you are new to Berlin just by your innocent questions. Our aristocracy, our old, real, genuine aristocracy, are full of the quaintest eccentricities, eccentricities inherited for centuries, eccentricities which they are prouder of than they are of their titles, and that sign-board there is one of them. They all hang them out. And it's regulated by an unwritten law. A baron is entitled to hang out two, a count five, a duke fifteen—"

"Then they are all dukes over on that side, I sup—"

"Every one of them. Now the old Duke of Backofenhofenschwartz—not the present Duke, but the last but one, he—"

"Does he live over the sausage-shop in the cellar?"

"No, the one farther along, where the eighteenth yellow cat is chewing the door-mat—"

"But *all* the yellow cats are chewing the door-mats."

"Yes, but I mean the eighteenth one. Count. No, never mind; there's a lot more come. I'll get you another mark. Let me see—"

They could not remain permanently in Körnerstrasse, but they stuck it out till the end of December—about two months. Then they made such settlement with the agent as they could—that is to say, they paid the rest of their year's rent—and established themselves in a handsome apartment at the Hotel Royal, Unter den Linden. There was no need to be ashamed of this address, for it was one of the best in Berlin.

As for Körnerstrasse, it is cleaner now. It is still not aristocratic, but it is eminently respectable. There is a new post-office that takes in Number 7, where one may post mail and send telegrams and use the *Fernsprecher*—which is to say the telephone—and be politely treated by uniformed officials, who have all heard of Mark Twain, but have no knowledge of his former occupation of their premises.

CLXXVIII

A WINTER IN BERLIN

CLEMENS, meantime, had been trying to establish himself in his work, but his rheumatism racked him occasionally and was always a menace. Closing a letter to Hall, he said:

"I must stop—my arm is howling."

He put in a good deal of time devising publishing schemes, principal among them being a plan for various cheap editions of his books, pamphlets, and such like, to sell for a few cents. These projects appear never to have been really undertaken, Hall very likely fearing that a flood of cheap issues would interfere with the more important trade. It seemed dangerous to trifle with an apparently increasing prosperity, and Clemens was willing enough to agree with this view.

Clemens had still another letter to write for Laffan and McClure, and he made a pretty careful study of Berlin with this in prospect. But his arm kept him from any regular work. He made notes, however. Once he wrote:

> The first gospel of all monarchies should be Rebellion; the second should be Rebellion; and the third and all gospels, and the only gospel of any monarchy, should be Rebellion—against Church and State.

And again:

> I wrote a chapter on this language 13 years ago and tried my level best to improve it and simplify it for these people, and this is the result—a word of thirty-nine letters. It merely con-

centrates the alphabet with a shovel. It hurts me to know that that chapter is not in any of their text-books and they don't use it in the university.

Socially, that winter in Berlin was eventful enough. William Walter Phelps, of New Jersey (Clemens had known him in America), was United States minister at the German capital, while at the Emperor's court there was a cousin, Frau von Versen, *née* Clemens, one of the St. Louis family. She had married a young German officer who had risen to the rank of a full general. Mark Twain and his family were welcome guests at all the diplomatic events—often brilliant levees, gatherings of distinguished men and women from every circle of achievement. Labouchère of *Truth* was there, De Blowitz of the *Times*, and authors, ambassadors, and scientists of rank. Clemens became immediately a distinguished figure at these assemblies. His popularity in Germany was openly manifested. At any gathering he was surrounded by a brilliant company, eager to do him honor. He was recognized whenever he appeared on the street, and saluted, though in his notes he says he was sometimes mistaken for the historian Mommsen, whom he resembled in hair and features. His books were displayed for sale everywhere, and a special cheap edition of them was issued at a few cents per copy.

Captain Bingham (later General Bingham, Commissioner of Police in New York City) and John Jackson were attachés of the legation, both of them popular with the public in general, and especially so with the Clemens family. Susy Clemens, writing to her father during a temporary absence, tells of a party at Mrs. Jackson's, and especially refers to Captain Bingham in the most complimentary terms.

"He never left me sitting alone, nor in an awkward situation of any kind, but always came cordially to the

rescue. My gratitude toward him was absolutely limitless."

She adds that Mrs. Bingham was very handsome and decidedly the most attractive lady present. Berlin was Susy's first real taste of society, and she was reveling in it. In her letter she refers to Minister Phelps by the rather disrespectful nickname of "Yaas," a term conferred because of his pronounciation of that affirmative. The Clemens children were not entirely happy in the company of the minister. They were fond of him, but he was a great tease. They were quite young enough, but it seemed always to give him delight to make them appear much younger. In the letter above quoted Susy says:

When I saw Mr. Phelps I put out my hand enthusiastically and said, "Oh, Mr. Phelps, good evening," whereat he drew back and said, so all could hear, "What, you here! why, you're too young. Do you think you know how to behave?" As there were two or three young gentlemen near by to whom I hadn't been introduced I wasn't exactly overjoyed at this greeting.

We may imagine that the nickname "Yaas" had been invented by Susy in secret retaliation, though she was ready enough to forgive him, for he was kindness itself at heart.

In one of his later dictations Clemens related an anecdote concerning a dinner with Phelps, when he (Clemens) had been invited to meet Count S——, a cabinet minister of long and illustrious descent. Clemens, and Phelps too, it seems, felt overshadowed by this ancestry.

Of course I wanted to let out the fact that I had some ancestors, too; but I did not want to pull them out of their graves by the ears, and I never could seem to get the chance to work them in, in a way that would look sufficiently casual. I suppose Phelps was in the same difficulty. In fact he looked distraught now and then—just as a person looks who wants to uncover an ancestor purely by accident and cannot think of a way that will seem accidental enough. But at last, after dinner, he made a try.

He took us about his drawing-room, showing us the pictures, and finally stopped before a rude and ancient engraving. It was a picture of the court that tried Charles I. There was a pyramid of judges in Puritan slouch hats, and below them three bare-headed secretaries seated at a table. Mr. Phelps put his finger upon one of the three and said, with exulting indifference:

"An ancestor of mine."

I put a finger on a judge and retorted with scathing languidness:

"Ancestor of mine. But it is a small matter. I have others."

Clemens was sincerely fond of Phelps and spent a good deal of time at the legation headquarters. Sometimes he wrote there. An American journalist, Henry W. Fischer, remembers seeing him there several times scribbling on such scraps of paper as came handy, and recalls that on one occasion he delivered an address to a German and English audience on the "Awful German Tongue." This was probably the lecture that brought Clemens to bed with pneumonia. With Mrs. Clemens he had been down to Ilsenburg, in the Hartz Mountains, for a week of change. It was pleasant there, and they would have remained longer but for the Berlin lecture engagement. As it was, they found Berlin very cold and the lecture-room crowded and hot. When the lecture was over they stopped at General von Versen's for a ball, arriving at home about two in the morning. Clemens awoke with a heavy cold and lung congestion. He remained in bed, a very sick man indeed, for the better part of a month. It was unpleasant enough at first, though he rather enjoyed the convalescent period. He could sit up in bed and read and receive occasional callers. Fischer brought him *Memoirs of the Margravine of Bayreuth*, always a favorite.[1] The Emperor sent Frau von

[1] Clemens was deeply interested in the Margravine, and at one time began a novel with her absorbing history as its theme. He gave it up, probably feeling that the romantic form could add nothing to the Margravine's own story.

Versen with an invitation for him to attend the consecration of some flags in the palace. When she returned, conveying thanks and excuses, his Majesty commanded her to prepare a dinner at her home for Mark Twain and himself and a few special guests, the date to be arranged when Clemens's physician should pronounce him well enough to attend.

Members of the Clemens household were impressed by this royal attention. Little Jean was especially awed. She said:

"I wish I could be in papa's clothes"; then, after reflection, "but that wouldn't be any use. I reckon the Emperor wouldn't recognize me." And a little later, when she had been considering all the notables and nobilities of her father's recent association, she added:

"Why, papa, if it keeps on like this, pretty soon there won't be anybody for you to get acquainted with but God," which Mark Twain decided was not quite as much of a compliment as it had at first seemed.

It was during the period of his convalescence that Clemens prepared his sixth letter for the New York *Sun* and McClure's syndicate, "The German Chicago," a finely descriptive article on Berlin, and German customs and institutions generally. Perhaps the best part of it is where he describes the grand and prolonged celebration which had been given in honor of Professor Virchow's seventieth birthday.[1] He tells how the demonstrations had continued in one form or another day after day, and merged at last into the seventieth birthday of Professor Helmholtz[2]; also how these great affairs finally culminated

[1] Rudolph Virchow, an eminent German pathologist and anthropologist and scholar; then one of the most prominent figures of the German Reichstag. He died in 1902.

[2] Herman von Helmholtz, an eminent German physicist, one of the most distinguished scientists of the nineteenth century. He died in 1894.

in a mighty *commers*, or beer-fest, given in their honor by a thousand German students. This letter has been published in Mark Twain's "Complete Works," and is well worth reading to-day. His place had been at the table of the two heroes of the occasion, Virchow and Helmholtz, a place where he could see and hear all that went on; and he was immensely impressed at the honor which Germany paid to her men of science. The climax came when Mommsen unexpectedly entered the room.[1]

There seemed to be some signal whereby the students on the platform were made aware that a professor had arrived at the remote door of entrance, for you would see them suddenly rise to their feet, strike an erect military attitude, then draw their swords; the swords of all their brethren standing guard at the innumerable tables would flash from the scabbard and be held aloft—a handsome spectacle. Three clear bugle-notes would ring out, then all these swords would come down with a crash, twice repeated, on the tables and be uplifted and held aloft again; then in the distance you would see the gay uniforms and uplifted swords of a guard of honor clearing the way and conducting the guest down to his place. The songs were stirring, and the immense outpour from young life and young lungs, the crash of swords, and the thunder of the beer-mugs gradually worked a body up to what seemed the last possible summit of excitement. It surely seemed to me that I had reached that summit, that I had reached my limit, and that there was no higher lift devisable for me. When apparently the last eminent guest had long ago taken his place, again those three bugle-blasts rang out, and once more the swords leaped from their scabbards. Who might this late comer be? Nobody was interested to inquire. Still, indolent eyes were turned toward the distant entrance, and we saw the silken gleam and the lifted sword of a guard of honor plowing through the remote

[1] Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903), an eminent German historian and archeologist, a powerful factor in all liberal movements. From 1874–1895 permanent secretary of the Berlin Royal Academy of Sciences.

crowds. Then we saw that end of the house rising to its feet; saw it rise abreast the advancing guard all along like a wave. This supreme honor had been offered to no one before. There was an excited whisper at our table—"Mommsen!"—and the whole house rose—rose and shouted and stamped and clapped and banged the beer-mugs. Just simply a storm! Then the little man with his long hair and Emersonian face edged his way past us and took his seat. I could have touched him with my hand—Mommsen!—think of it!

This was one of those immense surprises that can happen only a few times in one's life. I was not dreaming of him; he was to me only a giant myth, a world-shadowing specter, not a reality. The surprise of it all can be only comparable to a man's suddenly coming upon Mont Blanc, with its awful form towering into the sky, when he didn't suspect he was in its neighborhood. I would have walked a great many miles to get a sight of him, and here he was, without trouble, or tramp, or cost of any kind. Here he was, clothed in a titanic deceptive modesty which made him look like other men. Here he was, carrying the Roman world and all the Cæsars in his hospitable skull, and doing it as easily as that other luminous vault, the skull of the universe, carries the Milky Way and the constellations.

During his convalescent days, Clemens had plenty of time to reflect and to look out of the window. His notebook preserves some of his reflections. In one place he says:

The Emperor passes in a modest open carriage. Next that happy 12-year-old butcher-boy, all in white apron and turban, standing up & so proud!

How fast they drive—nothing like it but in London. And the horses seem to be of very fine breed, though I am not an expert in horses & do not speak with assurance. I can always tell which is the front end of a horse, but beyond that my art is not above the ordinary.

The "Court Gazette" of a German paper can be covered with a playing-card. In an English paper the movements of titled people take up about three times that room. In the papers of

Republican France from six to sixteen times as much. There, if a Duke's dog should catch cold in the head they would stop the press to announce it and cry about it. In Germany they respect titles, in England they revere them, in France they adore them. That is, the French newspapers do.

Been taken for Mommsen twice. We have the same hair, but on examination it was found the brains were different.

On February 14th he records that Professor Helmholtz called, but unfortunately leaves no further memorandum of that visit. He was quite recovered by this time, but was still cautioned about going out in the severe weather. In the final entry he says:

Thirty days sick abed—full of interest—read the debates and get excited over them, though don't *versteh.* By reading keep in a state of excited ignorance, like a blind man in a house afire; flounder around, immensely but unintelligently interested; don't know how I got in and can't find the way out, but I'm having a booming time all to myself.

Don't know what a Schelgesetzentwurf is, but I keep as excited over it and as worried about it as if it was my own child. I simply *live* on the Sch.; it is my daily bread. I wouldn't have the question settled for anything in the world. Especially now that I've lost the öffentliche Militärgericht circus. I read all the debates on that question with a never-failing interest, but all at once they sprung a vote on me a couple of days ago & did something by a vote of 100 to 143, but I couldn't find out what it was.

Soon after his arrival in Berlin in October, Clemens came across the old nursery book, *Struwelpeter*, and began its translation into English.

The quaint rhymes and pictures which Dr. Heinrich Hoffman had made to amuse his little patients, and later published with so much success, diverted Mark Twain. He finished his translation, but perhaps it did not satisfy him, for the project never went any further.

CLXXIX

A DINNER WITH WILLIAM II.

THE dinner with Emperor William II. at General von Versen's was set for the 20th of February. A few days before, Mark Twain entered in his note-book:

In that day the Imperial lion and the Democratic lamb shall sit down together, and a little General shall feed them.

Mark Twain was the guest of honor on this occasion, and was seated at the Emperor's right hand. The Emperor's brother, Prince Heinrich, sat opposite; Prince Radolin farther along. Rudolf Lindau, of the Foreign Office, was also present. There were fourteen at the table, all told. In his memorandum made at the time, Clemens gave no account of the dinner beyond the above details, only adding:

After dinner 6 or 8 officers came in, & all hands adjourned to the big room out of the smoking-room and held a "smoking parliament" after the style of the ancient Potsdam one, till midnight, when the Emperor shook hands and left.

It was not until fourteen years later that Mark Twain related some special matters pertaining to that evening. He may have expanded them somewhat to fill out spaces of his memory, and embroidered them, as was his wont; but that something happened, either in reality or in his imagination, which justified his version of it we may believe. He told it as here given, premising: "This may appear in print after I am dead, but not before."

"From 1891 until day before yesterday I had never mentioned the matter, nor set it down with a pen, nor ever referred to it in any way—not even to my wife, to whom I was accustomed to tell everything that happened to me.

"At the dinner his Majesty chatted briskly and entertainingly along in easy and flowing English, and now and then he interrupted himself to address a remark to me or to some other individual of the guests. When the reply had been delivered he resumed his talk. I noticed that the table etiquette tallied with that which was the law of my house at home when we had guests; that is to say, the guests answered when the host favored them with a remark, and then quieted down and behaved themselves until they got another chance. If I had been in the Emperor's chair and he in mine I should have felt infinitely comfortable and at home, but I was guest now, and consequently felt less at home. From old experience I was familiar with the rules of the game and familiar with their exercise from the high place of host; but I was not familiar with the trammeled and less satisfactory position of guest, therefore I felt a little strange and out of place. But there was no animosity—no, the Emperor was host, therefore, according to my own rule, he had a right to do the talking, and it was my honorable duty to intrude no interruptions or other improvements except upon invitation; and of course it could be my turn some day—some day, on some friendly visit of inspection to America, it might be my pleasure and distinction to have him as guest at my table; then I would give him a rest and a quiet time.

"In one way there was a difference between his table and mine—for instance, atmosphere; the guests stood in awe of him, and naturally they conferred that feeling upon me, for, after all, I am only human, although I regret it. When a guest answered a question he did it with

a deferential voice and manner; he did not put any emotion into it, and he did not spin it out, but got it out of his system as quickly as he could, and then looked relieved. The Emperor was used to this atmosphere, and it did not chill his blood; maybe it was an inspiration to him, for he was alert, brilliant, and full of animation; also he was most gracefully and felicitously complimentary to my books — and I will remark here that the happy phrasing of a compliment is one of the rarest of human gifts and the happy delivery of it another. I once mentioned the high compliment which he paid to the book *Old Times on the Mississippi;* but there were others, among them some high praise of my description in *A Tramp Abroad* of certain striking phases of German student life.

"Fifteen or twenty minutes before the dinner ended the Emperor made a remark to me in praise of our generous soldier pensions; then, without pausing, he continued the remark, not speaking to me, but across the table to his brother, Prince Heinrich. The Prince replied, indorsing the Emperor's view of the matter. Then I followed with my own view of it. I said that in the beginning our government's generosity to the soldier was clear in its intent and praiseworthy, since the pensions were conferred upon soldiers who had earned them, soldiers who had been disabled in the war and could no longer earn a livelihood for themselves and their families, but that the pensions decreed and added later lacked the virtue of a clean motive, and had, little by little, degenerated into a wider and wider and more and more offensive system of vote-purchasing, and was now become a source of corruption, which was an unpleasant thing to contemplate and was a danger besides. I think that that was about the substance of my remark; but in any case the remark had a quite definite result, and that is the memorable thing about it—manifestly it made everybody uncomfortable.

I seemed to perceive this quite plainly. I had committed an indiscretion. Possibly it was in violating etiquette by intruding a remark when I had not been invited to make one; possibly it was in taking issue with an opinion promulgated by his Majesty. I do not know which it was, but I quite clearly remember the effect which my act produced—to wit, the Emperor refrained from addressing any remarks to me afterward, and not merely during the brief remainder of the dinner, but afterward in the kneip-room, where beer and cigars and hilarious anecdoting prevailed until about midnight. I am sure that the Emperor's good night was the only thing he said to me in all that time.

"Was this rebuke studied and intentional? I don't know, but I regarded it in that way. I can't be absolutely sure of it because of modifying doubts created afterward by one or two circumstances. For example: the Empress Dowager invited me to her palace, and the reigning Empress invited me to breakfast, and also sent for General von Versen to come to her palace and read to her and her ladies from my books."

It was a personal message from the Emperor that fourteen years later recalled to him this curious circumstance. A gentleman whom Clemens knew went on a diplomatic mission to Germany. Upon being presented to Emperor William, the latter had immediately begun to talk of Mark Twain and his work. He spoke of the description of German student life as the greatest thing of its kind ever written, and of the sketch on the German language as wonderful; then he said:

"Convey to Mr. Clemens my kindest regards, ask him if he remembers that dinner at Von Versen's, and ask him why he didn't do any more talking at that dinner."

It seemed a mysterious message. Clemens thought it might have been meant to convey some sort of an imperial apology; but again it might have meant that Mark

Twain's breach and the Emperor's coolness on that occasion were purely imaginary, and that the Emperor had really expected him to talk far more than he did.

Returning to the Royal Hotel after the Von Versen dinner, Mark Twain received his second high compliment that day on the *Mississippi* book. The *portier*, a tow-headed young German, must have been comparatively new at the hotel; for apparently he had just that day learned that his favorite author, whose books he had long been collecting, was actually present in the flesh. Clemens, all ready to apologize for asking so late an admission, was greeted by the *portier's* round face all sunshine and smiles. The young German then poured out a stream of welcome and compliments and dragged the author to a small bedroom near the front door, where he excitedly pointed out a row of books, German translations of Mark Twain.

"There," he said; "you wrote them. I've found it out. Lieber Gott! I did not know it before, and I ask a million pardons. That one there, *Old Times on the Mississippi*, is the best you ever wrote."

The note-book records only one social event following the Emperor's dinner—a dinner with the secretary of the legation. The note says:

> At the Emperor's dinner black cravats were ordered. Tonight I went in a black cravat and everybody else wore white ones. Just my luck.

The Berlin activities came to an end then. He was still physically far from robust, and his doctors peremptorily ordered him to stay indoors or to go to a warmer climate. This was March 1st. Clemens and his wife took Joseph Very, and, leaving the others for the time in Berlin, set out for Mentone, in the south of France.

CLXXX

MANY WANDERINGS

MENTONE was warm and quiet, and Clemens worked when his arm permitted. He was alone there with Mrs. Clemens, and they wandered about a good deal, idling and picture-making, enjoying a sort of belated honeymoon. Clemens wrote to Susy:

> Joseph is gone to Nice to educate himself in kodaking—and to get the pictures mounted which mama thinks she took here; but I noticed she didn't take the plug out, as a rule. When she did she took nine pictures on top of each other—composites.

They remained a month in Mentone, then went over to Pisa, and sent Joseph to bring the rest of the party to Rome. In Rome they spent another month—a period of sight-seeing, enjoyable, but to Clemens pretty profitless.

"I do not expect to be able to write any literature this year," he said in a letter to Hall near the end of April. "The moment I take up my pen my rheumatism returns."

Still he struggled along and managed to pile up a good deal of copy in the course of weeks. From Rome to Florence, at the end of April, and so pleasing was the prospect, and so salubrious the air of that ancient city, that they resolved to engage residence there for the next winter. They inspected accommodations of various kinds, and finally, through Prof. Willard Fiske, were directed to the Villa Viviani, near Settignano, on a hill to the eastward of Florence, with vineyard and olive-grove sloping away to the city lying in a haze—a vision of beauty

and peace. They closed the arrangement for Viviani, and about the middle of May went up to Venice for a fortnight of sight-seeing—a break in the travel back to Germany. William Gedney Bunce, the Hartford artist, was in Venice, and Sarah Orne Jewett and other home friends.

From Venice, by way of Lake Como and "a tangled route" (his note-book says) to Lucerne, and so northward to Berlin and on to Bad Nauheim, where they had planned to spend the summer. Clemens for some weeks had contemplated a trip to America, for matters there seemed to demand his personal attention. Summer arrangements for the family being now concluded, he left within the week and set sail on the *Havel* for New York. To Jean he wrote a cheerful good-by letter, more cheerful, we may believe, than he felt.

BREMEN, 7.45 A.M., *June 14, 1892.*

DEAR JEAN CLEMENS,— I am up & shaved & got my clean shirt on & feel mighty fine, & am going down to show off before I put on the rest of my clothes.

Perhaps mama & Mrs. Hague can persuade the Hauswirth to do right; but if he don't you go down & kill his dog.

I wish you would invite the Consul-General and his ladies down to take one of those slim dinners with mama, then he would complain to the Government.

Clemens felt that his presence in America was demanded by two things. Hall's reports continued, as ever, optimistic; but the semi-annual statements were less encouraging. The *Library of Literature* and some of the other books were selling well enough; but the continuous increase of capital required by a business conducted on the instalment plan had steadily added to the firm's liabilities, while the prospect of a general tightening in the money-market made the outlook not a particularly happy one. Clemens thought he might be able to dispose of the *Library* or an interest in it, or even of his share of the business itself, to

some one with means sufficient to put it on an easier financial footing. The uncertainties of trade and the burden of increased debt had become a nightmare which interfered with his sleep. It seemed hard enough to earn a living with a crippled arm, without this heavy business care.

The second interest requiring attention was that other old one—the machine. Clemens had left the matter in Paige's hands, and Paige, with persuasive eloquence, had interested Chicago capital to a point where a company had been formed to manufacture the type-setter in that city. Paige reported that he had got several million dollars subscribed for the construction of a factory, and that he had been placed on a salary as a sort of general "consulting omniscient" at five thousand dollars a month. Clemens, who had been negotiating again with the Mallorys for the disposal of his machine royalties, thought it proper to find out just what was going on. He remained in America less than two weeks, during which he made a flying trip to Chicago and found that Paige's company really had a factory started, and proposed to manufacture fifty machines. It was not easy to find out the exact status of this new company, but Clemens at least was hopeful enough of its prospects to call off the negotiations with the Mallorys which had promised considerable cash in hand. He had been able to accomplish nothing material in the publishing situation, but his heart-to-heart talk with Hall for some reason had seemed comforting. The business had been expanding; they would now "concentrate." He returned on the *Lahn*, and he must have been in better health and spirits, for it is said he kept the ship very merry during the passage. He told many extravagantly amusing yarns; so many that a court was convened to try him on the charge of "inordinate and unscientific lying." Many witnesses testified, and his own testimony was so unconvincing that the jury convicted him without

leaving the bench. He was sentenced to read aloud from his own works for a considerable period every day until the steamer should reach port. It is said that he faithfully carried out this part of the program, and that the proceeds from the trial and the various readings amounted to something more than six hundred dollars, which was turned over to the Seamen's Fund.

Clemens's arm was really much better, and he put in a good deal of spare time during the trip writing an article on "All Sorts and Conditions of Ships," from Noah's Ark down to the fine new *Havel*, then the latest word in ship-construction. It was an article written in a happy vein and is profitable reading to-day. The description of Columbus as he appeared on the deck of his flag-ship is particularly rich and flowing:

> If the weather was chilly he came up clad from plumed helmet to spurred heel in magnificent plate-armor inlaid with arabesques of gold, having previously warmed it at the galley fire. If the weather was warm he came up in the ordinary sailor toggery of the time—great slouch hat of blue velvet, with a flowing brush of snowy ostrich-plumes, fastened on with a flashing cluster of diamonds and emeralds; gold-embroidered doublet of green velvet, with slashed sleeves exposing undersleeves of crimson satin; deep collar and cuff ruffles of rich, limp lace; trunk hose of pink velvet, with big knee-knots of brocaded yellow ribbon; pearl-tinted silk stockings, clocked and daintily embroidered; lemon-colored buskins of unborn kid, funnel-topped, and drooping low to expose the pretty stockings; deep gauntlets of finest white heretic skin, from the factory of the Holy Inquisition, formerly part of the person of a lady of rank; rapier with sheath crusted with jewels and hanging from a broad baldric upholstered with rubies and sapphires.

CLXXXI

NAUHEIM AND THE PRINCE OF WALES

CLEMENS was able to write pretty steadily that summer in Nauheim and turned off a quantity of copy. He completed several short articles and stories, and began, or at least continued work on, two books—*Tom Sawyer Abroad* and *Those Extraordinary Twins*—the latter being the original form of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*. As early as August 4th he wrote to Hall that he had finished forty thousand words of the "Tom Sawyer" story, and that it was to be offered to some young people's magazine, *Harper's Young People* or *St. Nicholas;* but then he suddenly decided that his narrative method was altogether wrong. To Hall on the 10th he wrote:

I have dropped that novel I wrote you about because I saw a more effective way of using the main episode—to wit, by telling it through the lips of Huck Finn. So I have started Huck Finn & Tom Sawyer (still 15 years old) & their friend the freed slave Jim around the world in a stray *balloon*, with Huck as narrator, & somewhere after the end of that great voyage he will work in that original episode & then nobody will suspect that a whole book has been written & the globe circumnavigated merely to get that episode in in an effective (& at the same time apparently unintentional) way. I have written 12,000 words of this new narrative, & find that the humor flows as easily as the adventures & surprises—so I shall go along and make a book of from 50,000 to 100,000 words.

It is a story for boys, of course, & I think it will interest any boy between 8 years & 80.

When I was in New York the other day Mrs. Dodge, editor of

St. Nicholas, wrote and offered me $5,000 for (serial right) a story for boys 50,000 words long. I wrote back and declined, for I had other matter in my mind then.

I conceive that the *right* way to write a story for boys is to write so that it will not only interest boys, but will also strongly interest any man *who has ever been a boy*. That immensely *enlarges the audience*.

Now, this story doesn't need to be restricted to a child's magazine—it is proper enough for any magazine, I should think, or for a syndicate. I don't swear it, but I think so.

Proposed title—*New Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

He was full of his usual enthusiasm in any new undertaking, and writes of the *Extraordinary Twins*:

By and by I shall have to offer (for grown folks' magazine) a novel entitled, *Those Extraordinary Twins*. It's the howling farce I told you I had begun awhile back. I laid it aside to ferment while I wrote *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, but I took it up again on a little different plan lately, and it is swimming along satisfactorily now. I think all sorts of folks will read it. It is clear out of the common order—it is a fresh idea—I don't think it resembles anything in literature.

He was quite right; it did not resemble anything in literature, nor did it greatly resemble literature, though something at least related to literature would eventually grow out of it.

In a letter written many years afterward by Frank Mason, then consul-general at Frankfort, he refers to "that happy summer at Nauheim." Mason was often a visitor there, and we may believe that his memory of the summer was justified. For one thing, Clemens himself was in better health and spirits and able to continue his work. But an even greater happiness lay in the fact that two eminent physicians had pronounced Mrs. Clemens free from any organic ills. To Orion, Clemens wrote:

We are in the clouds because the bath physicians say positively that Livy has no heart disease but has only weakness of

the heart muscles and will soon be well again. That was worth going to Europe to find out.

It was enough to change the whole atmosphere of the household, and financial worries were less considered. Another letter to Orion relates history:

The Twichells have been here four days & we have had good times with them. Joe & I ran over to Homburg, the great pleasure-resort, Saturday, to dine with friends, & in the morning I went walking in the promenade & met the British ambassador to the Court of Berlin and he introduced me to the Prince of Wales. I found him a most unusually comfortable and unembarrassing Englishman.

Twichell has reported Mark Twain's meeting with the Prince (later Edward VII.) as having come about by special request of the latter, made through the British ambassador. "The meeting," he says, "was a most cordial one on both sides, and presently the Prince took Mark Twain's arm and the two marched up and down, talking earnestly together, the Prince, solid, erect, and soldier-like, Clemens weaving along in his curious, swinging gait in a full tide of talk, and brandishing a sun-umbrella of the most scandalous description."

When they parted Clemens said:

"It has been, indeed, a great pleasure to meet your Royal Highness."

The Prince answered:

"And it is a pleasure, Mr. Clemens, to have met you—again."

Clemens was puzzled to reply.

"Why," he said, "have we met before?"

The Prince smiled happily.

"Oh yes," he said; "don't you remember that day on the Strand when you were on the top of a 'bus and I was heading a procession and you had on your new overcoat with flap-pockets?" [1]

[1] See chap. clxiii, "A Letter to the Queen of England."

It was the highest compliment he could have paid, for it showed that he had read, and had remembered all those years. Clemens expressed to Twichell regret that he had forgotten to mention his visit to the Prince's sister, Louise, in Ottawa, but he had his opportunity at a dinner next day. Later the Prince had him to supper and they passed an entire evening together.

There was a certain uneasiness in the Nauheim atmosphere that year, for the cholera had broken out at Hamburg, and its victims were dying at a terrific rate. It was almost impossible to get authentic news as to the spread of the epidemic, for the German papers were curiously conservative in their reports. Clemens wrote an article on the subject but concluded not to print it. A paragraph will convey its tenor.

> What I am trying to make the reader understand is the strangeness of the situation here—a mighty tragedy being played upon a stage that is close to us, & yet we are as ignorant of its details as we should be if the stage were in China. We sit "in front," & the audience is in fact the world; but the curtain is down, & from behind it we hear only an inarticulate murmur. The Hamburg disaster must go into history as the disaster without a history.

He closes with an item from a physician's letter—an item which he says "gives you a sudden and terrific sense of the situation there."

> For in a line it flashes before you—this ghastly picture—a thing seen by the physician: a wagon going along the street with five sick people in it, and with them four dead ones.

CLXXXII

THE VILLA VIVIANI

THE AMERICAN CLAIMANT, published in May (1892), did not bring a very satisfactory return. For one thing, the book-trade was light, and then the *Claimant* was not up to his usual standard. It had been written under hard circumstances and by a pen long out of practice; it had not paid, and its author must work all the harder on the new undertakings. The conditions at Nauheim seemed favorable, and they lingered there until well into September. To Mrs. Crane, who had returned to America, Clemens wrote on the 18th, from Lucerne, in the midst of their travel to Italy:

We remained in Nauheim a little too long. If we had left four or five days earlier we should have made Florence in three days. Hard trip because it was one of those trains that gets tired every 7 minutes and stops to rest three-quarters of an hour. It took us 3½ hours to get there instead of the regulation 2 hours. We shall pull through to Milan to-morrow if possible. Next day we shall start at 10 A.M and try to make Bologna, 5 hours. Next day, Florence, D. V. Next year we will walk. Phelps came to Frankfort and we had some great times—dinner at his hotel; & the Masons, supper at our inn—Livy not in it. She was merely allowed a glimpse, no more. Of course Phelps said she was merely pretending to be ill; was never looking so well & fine.

A Paris journal has created a happy interest by inoculating one of its correspondents with cholera. A man said yesterday he wished to God they would inoculate all of them. Yes, the interest is quite general and strong & much hope is felt.

Livy says I have said enough bad things, and better send all our loves & shut up. Which I do—and shut up.

They lingered at Lucerne until Mrs. Clemens was rested and better able to continue the journey, arriving at last in Florence, September 26th. They drove out to the Villa Viviani in the afternoon and found everything in readiness for their reception, even to the dinner, which was prepared and on the table. Clemens, in his notes, speaks of this and adds:

It takes but a sentence to state that, but it makes an indolent person tired to think of the planning & work and trouble that lie concealed in it.

Some further memoranda made at this time have that intimate interest which gives reality and charm. The *contadino* brought up their trunks from the station, and Clemens wrote:

The *contadino* is middle-aged & like the rest of the peasants—that is to say, brown, handsome, good-natured, courteous, & entirely independent without making any offensive show of it. He charged too much for the trunks, I was told. My informer explained that this was customary.

September 27. The rest of the trunks brought up this morning. He charged too much again, but I was told that this was also customary. It's all right, then. I do not wish to violate the customs. Hired landau, horses, & coachman. Terms, 480 francs a month & a *pourboire* to the coachman, I to furnish lodging for the man & the horses, but nothing else. The landau has seen better days & weighs 30 tons. The horses are feeble & object to the landau; they stop & turn around every now & then & examine it with surprise & suspicion. This causes delay. But it entertains the people along the road. They came out & stood around with their hands in their pockets & discussed the matter with each other. I was told that they said that a 30-ton landau was not the thing for horses like those—what they needed was a wheelbarrow.

His description of the house pictures it as exactly to-day as it did then, for it has not changed in these twenty years, nor greatly, perhaps, in the centuries since it was built.

It is a plain, square building, like a box, & is painted light yellow & has green window-shutters. It stands in a commanding position on the artificial terrace of liberal dimensions, which is walled around with masonry. From the walls the vineyards & olive orchards of the estate slant away toward the valley. There are several tall trees, stately stone-pines, also fig-trees & trees of breeds not familiar to me. Roses overflow the retaining-walls, & the battered & mossy stone urn on the gate-posts, in pink & yellow cataracts exactly as they do on the drop-curtains in the theaters. The house is a very fortress for strength. The main walls—all brick covered with plaster—are about 3 feet thick. I have several times tried to count the rooms of the house, but the irregularities baffle me. There seem to be 28. There are plenty of windows & worlds of sunlight. The floors are sleek & shiny & full of reflections, for each is a mirror in its way, softly imaging all objects after the subdued fashion of forest lakes. The curious feature of the house is the salon. This is a spacious & lofty vacuum which occupies the center of the house. All the rest of the house is built around it; it extends up through both stories & its roof projects some feet above the rest of the building. The sense of its vastness strikes you the moment you step into it & cast your eyes around it & aloft. There are 5 divans distributed along its walls. They make little or no show, though their aggregate length is 57 feet. A piano in it is a lost object. We have tried to reduce the sense of desert space & emptiness with tables & things, but they have a defeated look, & do not do any good. Whatever stands or moves under that soaring painted vault is belittled.

He describes the interior of this vast room (they grew to love it), dwelling upon the plaster-relief portraits above its six doors, Florentine senators and judges, ancient dwellers there and former owners of the estate.

The date of one of them is 1305—middle-aged, then, & a judge—he could have known, as a youth, the very greatest Italian artists, & he could have walked & talked with Dante, & probably did. The date of another is 1343—he could have known Boccaccio & spent his afternoons wandering in Fiesole, gazing down on plague-reeking Florence & listening to that man's improper tales, & he probably did. The date of another is 1463—he could have met Columbus & he knew the magnificent Lorenzo, of course. These are all Cerretanis—or Cerretani-Twains, as I may say, for I have adopted myself into their family on account of its antiquity—my origin having been heretofore too recent to suit me.

We are considering the details of Viviani at some length, for it was in this setting that he began and largely completed what was to be his most important work of this later time—in some respects his most important of any time—the *Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc.* If the reader loves this book, and he must love it if he has read it, he will not begrudge the space here given to the scene of its inspiration. The outdoor picture of Viviani is of even more importance, for he wrote oftener out-of-doors than elsewhere. Clemens added it to his notes several months later, but it belongs here.

The situation of this villa is perfect. It is three miles from Florence, on the side of a hill. Beyond some hill-spurs is Fiesole perched upon its steep terraces; in the immediate foreground is the imposing mass of the Ross castle, its walls and turrets rich with the mellow weather-stains of forgotten centuries; in the distant plain lies Florence, pink & gray & brown, with the ruddy, huge dome of the cathedral dominating its center like a captive balloon, & flanked on the right by the smaller bulb of the Medici chapel & on the left by the airy tower of the Palazzo Vecchio; all around the horizon is a billowy rim of lofty blue hills, snowed white with innumerable villas. After nine months of familiarity with this panorama I still think, as I thought in the beginning, that this is the fairest picture on our planet, the most enchanting

to look upon, the most satisfying to the eye & the spirit. To see the sun sink down, drowned in his pink & purple & golden floods, & overwhelm Florence with tides of color that make all the sharp lines dim & faint & turn the solid city into a city of dreams, is a sight to stir the coldest nature & make a sympathetic one drunk with ecstasy.

The Clemens household at Florence consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Clemens, Susy, and Jean. Clara had soon returned to Berlin to attend Mrs. Willard's school and for piano instruction. Mrs. Clemens improved in the balmy autumn air of Florence and in the peaceful life of their well-ordered villa. In a memorandum of October 27th Clemens wrote:

The first month is finished. We are wonted now. This carefree life at a Florentine villa is an ideal existence. The weather is divine, the outside aspects lovely, the days and nights tranquil and reposeful, the seclusion from the world and its worries as satisfactory as a dream. Late in the afternoons friends come out from the city & drink tea in the open air & tell what is happening in the world; & when the great sun sinks down upon Florence & the daily miracle begins they hold their breath & look. It is not a time for talk.

No wonder he could work in that environment. He finished *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, also a short story, "The £1,000,000 Bank-Note" (planned many years before), discovered the literary mistake of the *Extraordinary Twins* and began converting it into the worthier tale, *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, soon completed and on its way to America.

With this work out of his hands, Clemens was ready for his great new undertaking. A seed sown by the wind more than forty years before was ready to bloom. He would write the story of Joan of Arc.

CLXXXIII

THE SIEUR DE CONTE AND JOAN

IN a note which he made many years later Mark Twain declared that he was fourteen years at work on *Joan of Arc;* that he had been twelve years preparing for it, and that he was two years in writing it.

There is nothing in any of his earlier notes or letters to indicate that he contemplated the story of Joan as early as the eighties; but there is a bibliographical list of various works on the subject, probably compiled for him not much later than 1880, for the latest published work of the list bears that date. He was then too busy with his inventions and publishing schemes to really undertake a work requiring such vast preparation; but without doubt he procured a number of books and renewed that old interest begun so long ago when a stray wind had blown a leaf from that tragic life into his own. *Joan of Arc*, by Janet Tuckey, was apparently the first book he read with the definite idea of study, for this little volume had been recently issued, and his copy, which still exists, is filled with his marginal notes. He did not speak of this volume in discussing the matter in after-years. He may have forgotten it. He dwelt mainly on the old records of the trial which had been dug out and put into modern French by Quicherat; the *Jeanne d'Arc* of J. Michelet, and the splendid *Life of the Maid* of Lord Ronald Gower, these being remembered as his chief sources of information.[1]

[1] The book of Janet Tuckey, however, and ten others, including those mentioned, are credited as "authorities examined in verification" on a front page of his published book. In a letter written

"I could not get the Quicherat and some of the other books in English," he said, "and I had to dig them out of the French. I began the story five times."

None of these discarded beginnings exists to-day, but we may believe they were wisely put aside, for no story of the Maid could begin more charmingly, more rarely, than the one supposedly told in his old age by Sieur Louis de Conte, secretary of Joan of Arc, and translated by Jean François Alden for the world to read. The impulse which had once prompted Mark Twain to offer *The Prince and the Pauper* anonymously now prevailed. He felt that the *Prince* had missed a certain appreciation by being connected with his signature, and he resolved that its companion piece (he so regarded *Joan*) should be accepted on its merits and without prejudice. Walking the floor one day at Viviani, smoking vigorously, he said to Mrs. Clemens and Susy:

"I shall never be accepted seriously over my own signature. People always want to laugh over what I write and are disappointed if they don't find a joke in it. This is to be a serious book. It means more to me than anything I have ever undertaken. I shall write it anonymously."

So it was that the gentle, quaint Sieur de Conte took up the pen, and the tale of *Joan* was begun in that beautiful spot which of all others seems now the proper environment for its lovely telling.

He wrote rapidly once he got his plan perfected and his material arranged. The reading of his youth and manhood, with the vivid impressions of that earlier time, became now something remembered, not merely as reading, but as fact.

at the conclusion of "Joan" in 1895, the author states that in the first two-thirds of the story he used one French and one English authority, while in the last third he had constantly drawn from five French and five English sources.

Others of the family went down into the city almost daily, but he remained in that still garden with *Joan* as his companion—the old Sieur de Conte, saturated with memories, pouring out that marvelous and tragic tale. At the end of each day he would read to the others what he had written, to their enjoyment and wonder.

How rapidly he worked may be judged from a letter which he wrote to Hall in February, in which he said:

> I am writing a companion piece to *The Prince and the Pauper*, which is half done & will make 200,000 words.

That is to say, he had written one hundred thousand words in a period of perhaps six weeks, marvelous work when one remembers that after all he was writing history, some of which he must dig laboriously from a foreign source. He had always, more or less, kept up his study of the French, begun so long ago on the river and it stood him in good stead now. Still, it was never easy for him, and the multitude of notes along the margin of his French authorities bear evidence of his faithfulness and the magnitude of his toil. No previous work had ever required so much of him, such thorough knowledge; none had ever so completely commanded his interest. He would have been willing to remain shut away from visitors, to have been released altogether from social obligations; and he did avoid most of them. Not all, for he could not always escape, and perhaps did not always really wish to. Florence and its suburbs were full of delightful people—some of them his old friends. There were luncheons, dinners, teas, dances, concerts, operas always in progress somewhere, and not all of these were to be resisted even by an absorbed author who was no longer himself, but sad old Sieur de Conte, following again the banner of the Maid of Orleans, marshaling her twilight armies across his illumined page.

CLXXXIV

NEW HOPE IN THE MACHINE

IF all human events had not been ordered in the first act of the primal atom, and so become inevitable, it would seem a pity now that he must abandon his work half-way, and make another hard, distracting trip to America.

But it was necessary for him to go. Even Hall was no longer optimistic. His letters provided only the barest shreds of hope. Times were hard and there was every reason to believe they would be worse. The World's Fair year promised to be what it speedily became—one of the hardest financial periods this country has ever seen. Chicago could hardly have selected a more profitless time for her great exposition. Clemens wrote urging Hall to sell out all, or a portion, of the business—to do anything, indeed, that would avoid the necessity of further liability and increased dread. Every payment that could be spared from the sales of his manuscript was left in Hall's hands, and such moneys as still came to Mrs. Clemens from her Elmira interests were flung into the general fund. The latter were no longer large, for Langdon & Co. were suffering heavily in the general depression, barely hoping to weather the financial storm.

It is interesting to note that age and misfortune and illness had a tempering influence on Mark Twain's nature. Instead of becoming harsh and severe and bitter, he had become more gentle, more kindly. He wrote often to Hall, always considerately, even tenderly. Once, when something in Hall's letter suggested that he had perhaps been severe, he wrote:

Mrs. Clemens is deeply distressed, for she thinks I have been blaming you or finding fault with you about something. But most assuredly that cannot be. I tell her that although I am prone to write hasty and regrettable things to other people I am not a bit likely to write such things to you. I can't believe I have done anything so ungrateful. If I have, pile coals of fire upon my head for I deserve it. You have done magnificently with the business, & we must raise the money somehow to enable you to reap a reward for all that labor.

He was fond of Hall. He realized how honest and resolute and industrious he had been. In another letter he wrote him that it was wonderful he had been able to "keep the ship afloat in the storm that has seen fleets and fleets go down"; and he added: "Mrs. Clemens says I must tell you not to send us any money for a month or two, so that you may be afforded what little relief is in our power."

The type-setter situation seemed to promise something. In fact, the machine once more had become the principal hope of financial salvation. The new company seemed really to be getting ahead in spite of the money stringency, and was said to have fifty machines well under way. About the middle of March Clemens packed up two of his shorter manuscripts which he had written at odd times and forwarded them to Hall, in the hope that they would be disposed of and the money waiting him on his arrival; and a week later, March 22, 1893, he sailed from Genoa on the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.*, a fine, new boat. One of the manuscripts was "The Californian's Tale" and the other was *Adam's Diary*.[1]

[1] It seems curious that neither of these tales should have found welcome with the magazines. "The Californian's Tale" was published in the *Liber Scriptorum*, an Authors' Club book, edited by Rossiter Johnson, assisted by John D. Champlin and George Carey Eggleston. The *Diary* was disposed of to the *Niagara Book*, a souvenir of Niagara Falls, which contained sketches by Howells, Clemens, and others. *Harper's Magazine* republished both these stories.

Some joke was likely to be played on Mark Twain during these ocean journeys, and for this particular voyage an original one was planned. They knew how he would fume and swear if he should be discovered with dutiable goods and held up in the Custom House, and they planned for this effect. A few days before arriving in New York one passenger after another came to him, each with a box of expensive cigars, and some pleasant speech expressing friendship and appreciation and a hope that they would be remembered in absence, etc., until he had perhaps ten or a dozen very choice boxes of smoking material. He took them all with gratitude and innocence. He had never declared any dutiable baggage, entering New York alone, and it never occurred to him that he would need to do so now. His trunk and bags were full; he had the cigars made into a nice package, to be carried handily, and on his arrival at the North German Lloyd docks stood waiting among his things for the formality of Customs examination, his friends assembled for the explosion.

They had not calculated well; the Custom-House official came along presently with the usual "Open your baggage, please," then suddenly recognizing the owner of it he said:

"Oh, Mr. Clemens, excuse me. We have orders to extend to you the courtesies of the port. No examination of your effects is necessary."

It was the evening of Monday, April 3d, when he landed in New York and went to the Hotel Glenham. In his notes he tells of having a two-hour talk with Howells on the following night. They had not seen each other for two years, and their correspondence had been broken off. It was a happy, even if somewhat sad, reunion, for they were no longer young, and when they called the roll of friends there were many vacancies. They had reached an age where some one they loved died every year. Writing

to Mrs. Crane, Clemens speaks of the ghosts of memory; then he says:

I dreamed I was born & grew up & was a pilot on the Mississippi & a miner & a journalist in Nevada & a pilgrim in the *Quaker City* & had a wife & children & went to live in a villa at Florence—& this dream goes on & on & sometimes seems so real that I almost believe it is real. I wonder if it is? But there is no way to tell, for if one applies tests they would be part of the dream, too, & so would simply aid the deceit. I wish I knew whether it is a dream or real.

He was made handsomely welcome in New York. His note-book says:

Wednesday. Dined with Mary Mapes Dodge, Howells, Rudyard Kipling & wife, Clarke,[1] Jamie Dodge & wife.

Thursday, 6th. Dined with Andrew Carnegie, Prof. Goldwin Smith, John Cameron, Mr. Glenn. Creation of league for absorbing Canada into our Union. Carnegie also wants to add Great Britain & Ireland.

It was on this occasion that Carnegie made his celebrated maxim about the basket and the eggs. Clemens was suggesting that Carnegie take an interest in the type-setter, and quoted the old adage that one should not put all of his eggs into one basket. Carnegie regarded him through half-closed lids, as was his custom, and answered:

"That's a mistake; put all your eggs into one basket—and watch that basket."

He had not come to America merely for entertainment. He was at the New York office of the type-setter company, acquiring there what seemed to be good news, for he was assured that his interests were being taken care of, and that within a year at most his royalty returns would place him far beyond the fear of want. He for-

[1] William Fayal Clarke, now editor of *St. Nicholas Magazine.*

warded this good news to Italy, where it was sorely needed, for Mrs. Clemens found her courage not easy to sustain in his absence. That he had made his letter glowing enough, we may gather from her answer.

It does not seem credible that we are really again to have money to *spend*. I think I will jump around and spend money just for fun, and give a little away, if we really get some. What should we do and how should we feel if we had no bright prospects before us, and yet how many people are situated in that way?

He decided to make another trip to Chicago to verify, with his own eyes, the manufacturing reports, and to see Paige, who would appear to have become more elusive than ever as to contracts, written and implied. He took Hall with him, and wrote Orion to meet him at the Great Northern Hotel. This would give him a chance to see Orion and would give Orion a chance to see the great Fair. He was in Chicago eleven days, and in bed with a heavy cold almost the whole of that time. Paige came to see him at his rooms, and, as always, was rich in prospects and promises; full of protestations that, whatever came, when the tide of millions rolled in, they would share and share alike. The note-book says:

Paige shed even more tears than usual. What a talker he is! He could persuade a fish to come out and take a walk with him. When he is present I always believe him; I can't help it.

Clemens returned to New York as soon as he was able to travel. Going down in the elevator a man stepped in from one of the floors swearing violently. Clemens, leaning over to Hall, with his hand to his mouth, and in a whisper audible to every one, said:

"Bishop of Chicago."

The man, with a quick glance, recognized his fellow-passenger and subsided.

On May 13th Clemens took the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* for Genoa. He had accomplished little, but he was in better spirits as to the machine. If only the strain of his publishing business had slackened even for a moment! Night and day it was always with him. Hall presently wrote that the condition of the money-market was "something beyond description. You cannot get money on anything short of government bonds." The Mount Morris Bank would no longer handle their paper. The Clemens household resorted to economies hitherto undreamed of. Mrs. Clemens wrote to her sister that she really did not see sometimes where their next money would come from. She reported that her husband got up in the night and walked the floor in his distress.

He wrote again to Hall, urging him to sell and get rid of the debts and responsibilities at whatever sacrifice:

> I am terribly tired of business. I am by nature and disposition unfit for it, & I want to get out of it. I am standing on the Mount Morris volcano with help from the machine a long, long way off—& doubtless a long way further off than the Connecticut company imagine.
>
> Get me out of business!

He knew something of the delays of completing a typesetting machine, and he had little faith in any near relief from that source He wrote again to Hall, urging him to sell some of his type-setter royalties. They should be worth something now since the manufacturing company was actually in operation; but with the terrible state of the money-market there was no sale for anything. Clemens attempted to work, but put in most of his time footing up on the margin of his manuscript the amount of his indebtedness, the expenses of his household, and the possibilities of his income. It was weary, hard, nerve-racking employment. About the middle of June they closed Viviani. Susy Clemens went to Paris to cultivate her

voice, a rare soprano, with a view to preparing for the operatic stage. Clemens took Mrs. Clemens, with little Jean, to Germany for the baths. Clara, who had graduated from Mrs. Willard's school in Berlin, joined them in Munich, and somewhat later Susy also joined them, for Madame Marchesi, the great master of voice-culture, had told her that she must acquire physique to carry that voice of hers before she would undertake to teach her.

In spite of his disturbed state of mind Clemens must have completed some literary work during this period, for we find first mention, in a letter to Hall, of his immortal defense of Harriet Shelley, a piece of writing all the more marvelous when we consider the conditions of its performance. Characteristically, in the same letter, he suddenly develops a plan for a new enterprise—this time for a magazine which Arthur Stedman or his father will edit, and the Webster company will publish as soon as their present burdens are unloaded. But we hear no more of this project.

By August he was half beside himself with anxiety. On the 6th he wrote Hall:

> Here we never see a newspaper, but even if we did I could not come anywhere near appreciating or correctly estimating the tempest you have been buffeting your way through—only the man who is in it can do that—but I have tried not to burden you thoughtlessly or wantonly. I have been overwrought & unsettled in mind by apprehensions, & that is a thing that is not helpable when one is in a strange land & sees his resources melt down to a two months' supply & can't see any sure daylight beyond. The bloody machine offers but a doubtful outlook—& will still offer nothing much better for a long time to come; for when the "three weeks" are up, there will be three months' tinkering to follow, I guess. That is unquestionably the boss machine of the world, but is the toughest one on prophets when it is in an incomplete state that has ever seen the light.

And three days later:

Great Scott, but it's a long year—for you & me! I never knew the almanac to drag so. At least not since I was finishing that *other* machine.

I watch for your letters hungrily—just as I used to watch for the telegram saying the machine's finished—but when "next week *certainly*" suddenly swelled into "three weeks *sure*" I recognized the old familiar tune I used to hear so much. W—— don't know what sickheartedness is—but he is in a way to find out.

And finally, on the 14th:

I am very glad indeed if you and Mr. Langdon are able to see any daylight ahead. To me none is visible. I strongly advise that every penny that comes in shall be applied to paying off debts. I may be in error about this, but it seems to me that we have no other course open. We can pay a part of the debts owing to outsiders—none to Clemenses. In very prosperous times we might regard our stock & copyrights as assets sufficient, with the money owing to us, to square up & quit even, but I suppose we may not hope for such luck in the present condition of things.

What I am mainly hoping for is to save my book royalties. If they come into danger I hope you will cable me so that I can come over & try to save them, for if they go I am a beggar.

I would sail to-day if I had anybody to take charge of my family & help them through the difficult journeys commanded by the doctors.

A few days later he could stand it no longer, and on August 29 (1893) sailed, the second time that year, for New York.

CLXXXV

AN INTRODUCTION TO H. H. ROGERS

CLEMENS took a room at The Players—"a cheap room," he wrote, "at $1.50 per day." It was now the end of September, the beginning of a long half-year, during which Mark Twain's fortunes were at a lower ebb than ever before; lower, even, than during those mining days among the bleak Esmeralda hills. Then he had no one but himself, and was young. Now, at fifty-eight, he had precious lives dependent upon him, and he was weighed down with a vast burden of debt. The liabilities of Charles L. Webster & Co. were fully two hundred thousand dollars. Something like sixty thousand dollars of this was money supplied by Mrs. Clemens, but the vast remaining sum was due to banks, to printers, to binders, and to dealers in various publishing materials. Somehow it must be paid. As for their assets, they looked ample enough on paper, but in reality, at a time like this, they were problematical. In fact, their value was very doubtful indeed. What he was to do Clemens did not know. He could not even send cheerful reports to Europe. There was no longer anything to promise concerning the type-setter. The fifty machines which the company had started to build had dwindled to ten machines; there was a prospect that the ten would dwindle to one, and that one a reconstruction of the original Hartford product, which had cost so much money and so many weary years. Clemens spent a good part of his days at The Players, reading or trying to write or seeking to divert his mind in the company of the congenial souls there, waiting for—he knew not what.

Yet at this very moment a factor was coming into his life, a human element, a man to whom in his old age Mark Twain owed more than to any other of his myriad of friends. One night, when he was with Dr. Clarence C. Rice at the Murray Hill Hotel, Rice said:

"Clemens, I want you to know my friend, Mr. H. H. Rogers. He is an admirer of your books."

Clemens turned and was looking into the handsome, clean-cut features of the great financier, whose name was hardly so familiar then as it became at a later period, but whose power was already widely known and felt among his kind.

"Mr. Clemens," said Mr. Rogers, "I was one of your early admirers. I heard you lecture a long time ago on the Sandwich Islands. I was interested in the subject in those days, and I heard that Mark Twain was a man who had been there. I didn't suppose I'd have any difficulty getting a seat, but I did; the house was jammed. When I came away I realized that Mark Twain was a great man, and I have read everything of yours since that I could get hold of."

They sat down at a table, and Clemens told some of his amusing stories. Rogers was in a perpetual gale of laughter. When at last he rose to go the author and the financier were as old friends. Mr. Rogers urged him to visit him at his home. He must introduce him to Mrs. Rogers, he said, who was also his warm admirer. It was only a little while after this that Dr. Rice said to the millionaire:

"Mr. Rogers, I wish you would look into Clemens's finances a little. I am afraid they are a good deal confused."

This would be near the end of September, 1893. On October 18 Clemens wrote home concerning a possible combination of Webster & Co. with John Brisben Walker, of the *Cosmopolitan*, and added:

I have got the best and wisest man of the whole Standard Oil group—a multi-millionaire—a good deal interested in looking into the type-setter. He has been searching into that thing for three weeks and yesterday he said to me:

"I find the machine to be all you represent it. I have here exhaustive reports from my own experts, and I know every detail of its capacity, its immense construction, its cost, its history, and all about its inventor's character. I know that the New York company and the Chicago company are *both* stupid, and that they are unbusinesslike people, destitute of money and in a hopeless boggle."

Then he told me the scheme he had planned and said:

"If I can arrange with these people on this basis—it will take several weeks to find out—I will see to it that they get the money they need. In the mean time *you 'stop walking the floor.'*"

Of course, with this encouragement, Clemens was in the clouds again. Furthermore, Rogers had suggested to his son-in-law, William Evarts Benjamin, also a subscription publisher, that he buy from the Webster company *The Library of American Literature* for fifty thousand dollars, a sum which provided for the more insistent creditors. There was hope that the worst was over. Clemens did in reality give up walking the floor, and for the time, at least, found happier diversions. He must not return to Europe as yet, for the type-setter matter was still far from conclusion. On the 11th of November he was gorgeously entertained by the Lotos Club in its new building. Introducing him, President Frank Lawrence said:

" What name is there in literature that can be likened to his? Perhaps some of the distinguished gentlemen about this table can tell us, but I know of none. Himself his only parallel, it seems to me. He is all our own —a ripe and perfect product of the American soil."

CLXXXVI

"THE BELLE OF NEW YORK"

THOSE were feverish weeks of waiting, with days of alternate depression and exaltation as the pendulum swung to and fro between hope and despair. By daylight Clemens tried to keep himself strenuously busy; evenings and nights he plunged into social activities—dinners, amusements, suppers, balls, and the like. He was besieged with invitations, sought for by the gayest and the greatest; "Jamie" Dodge conferred upon him the appropriate title of "The Belle of New York." In his letters home he describes in detail many of the festivities and the wildness with which he has flung himself into them, dilating on his splendid renewal of health, his absolute immunity from fatigue. He attributes this to his indifference to diet and regularities of meals and sleep; but we may guess that it was due to a reaction from having shifted his burden to stronger financial shoulders. Henry Rogers had taken his load upon him.

"It rests me," Rogers said, "to experiment with the affairs of a friend when I am tired of my own. You enjoy yourself. Let me work at the puzzle a little."

And Clemens, though his conscience pricked him, obeyed, as was his habit at such times. To Mrs. Clemens (in Paris now, at the Hôtel Brighton) he wrote:

He is not common clay, but fine—fine & delicate. I did hate to burden his good heart & overworked head, but he took hold with avidity & said it was no burden to work for his friends, but

a pleasure. When I arrived in September, Lord! how black the prospect was & how desperate, how incurably desperate! Webster & Co. had to have a small sum of money or go under at once. I flew to Hartford—to my friends—but they were not moved, not strongly interested, & I was ashamed that I went. It was from Mr. Rogers, a stranger, that I got the money and was by it saved. And then—while still a stranger—he set himself the task of saving my financial life without putting upon me (in his native delicacy) any sense that I was the recipient of a charity, a benevolence. He gave time to me—time, which could not be bought by any man at $100,000 a month—no, nor for three times the money.

He adds that a friend has just offered to Webster & Co. a book that arraigns the Standard Oil magnates individual by individual.

I wanted to say the only man I care for in the world, the only man I would give a d—n for, the only man who is lavishing his sweat & blood to save me & mine from starvation is a Standard Oil magnate. If you know me, you know whether I want the book or not.

But I didn't say that. I said I didn't want *any* book; I wanted to get out of this publishing business & out of all business & was here for that purpose & would accomplish it if I could.

He tells how he played billiards with Rogers, tirelessly as always, until the millionaire had looked at him helplessly and asked:

"Don't you ever get tired?"

And he answered:

"I don't know what it is to get tired. I wish I did."

He wrote of going with Mr. Rogers to the Madison Square Garden to see an exhibition of boxing given by the then splendid star of pugilism, James J. Corbett. Dr. Rice accompanied him, and painters Robert Reid and Edward Simmons, from The Players. They had five seats in a box, and Stanford White came along presently and took Clemens into the champion's dressing-room.

Corbett has a fine face and is modest and diffident, besides being the most perfectly & beautifully constructed human animal in the world. I said:

"You have whipped Mitchell & maybe you will whip Jackson in June—but you are not done then. You will have to tackle me."

He answered, so gravely that one might easily have thought him in earnest:

"No, I am not going to meet you in the ring. It is not fair or right to require it. You might chance to knock me out, by no merit of your own, but by a purely accidental blow, & then my reputation would be gone & you would have a double one. You have got fame enough & you ought not to want to take mine away from me."

Corbett was for a long time a clerk in the Nevada Bank, in San Francisco.

There were lots of little boxing-matches to entertain the crowd; then at last Corbett appeared in the ring & the 8,000 people present went mad with enthusiasm. My two artists went mad about his form. They said they had never seen anything that came reasonably near equaling its perfection except Greek statues, & *they* didn't surpass it.

Corbett boxed 3 rounds with the middle-weight Australian champion—oh, beautiful to see!—then the show was over and we struggled out through a perfect mash of humanity. When we reached the street I found I had left my arctics in the box. I had to have them, so Simmons said he would go back & get them, & I didn't dissuade him. I couldn't see how he was going to make his way a single yard into that solid incoming wave of people—yet he must plow through it full 50 yards. He was back with the shoes in 3 minutes!

How do you reckon he accomplished that miracle? By saying:

"Way, gentlemen, please—coming to fetch Mr. Corbett's overshoes."

The word flew from mouth to mouth, the Red Sea divided, & Simmons walked comfortably through & back, dry-shod. This is Fire-escape Simmons, the inveterate talker, you know: *Exit—in case of Simmons.*

I had an engagement at a beautiful dwelling close to The Players for 10.30; I was there by 10.45. Thirty cultivated &

very musical ladies & gentlemen present—all of them acquaintances & many of them personal friends of mine. That wonderful Hungarian band was there (they charge $500 for an evening). Conversation and band until midnight; then a bite of supper; then the company was compactly grouped before me & I told them about Dr. B. E. Martin & the etchings, & followed it with the Scotch-Irish christening. My, but the Martin is a darling story! Next, the head tenor from the Opera sang half a dozen great songs that set the company wild, yes, mad with delight, that nobly handsome young Damrosch accompanying on the piano.

Just a little pause, then the band burst out into an explosion of weird and tremendous dance-music, a Hungarian celebrity & his wife took the floor; I followed—I couldn't help it; the others drifted in, one by one, & it was Onteora over again.

By half past 4 I had danced all those people down—& yet was not tired; merely breathless. I was in bed at 5 & asleep in ten minutes. Up at 9 & presently at work on this letter to you. I think I wrote until 2 or half past. Then I walked leisurely out to Mr. Rogers's (it is called 3 miles, but is short of it), arriving at 3.30, but he was out—to return at 5.30—so I didn't stay, but dropped over and chatted with Howells until five.[1]

[1] Two Mark Twain anecdotes are remembered of that winter at The Players:

Just before Christmas a member named Scott said one day:

"Mr. Clemens, you have an extra overcoat hanging in the coat-room. I've got to attend my uncle's funeral and it's raining very hard. I'd like to wear it."

The coat was an old one, in the pockets of which Clemens kept a melancholy assortment of pipes, soiled handkerchiefs, neckties, letters, and what not.

"Scott," he said, "if you won't lose anything out of the pockets of that coat you may wear it."

An hour or two later Clemens found a notice in his mail-box that a package for him was in the office. He called for it and found a neat bundle, which somehow had a Christmas look. He carried it up to the reading-room with a showy air.

"Now, boys," he said, "you may make all the fun of Christmas you like, but it's pretty nice, after all, to be remembered."

They gathered around and he undid the package. It was filled

In one letter he tells of a dinner with his old Comstock friend, John Mackay—a dinner without any frills, just soup and raw oysters and corned beef and cabbage, such as they had reveled in sometimes, in prosperous moments, thirty years before.

"The guests were old gray Pacific coasters," he said, "whom I knew when they were young and not gray. The talk was of the days when we went gipsying—a long time ago—thirty years."

Indeed, it was a talk of the dead. Mainly that. And of how they looked & the harum-scarum things they did & said. For there were no cares in that life, no aches & pains, & not time enough in the day (& three-fourths of the night) to work off one's surplus vigor & energy. Of the midnight highway-robbery joke played upon me with revolvers at my head on the wind-swept & desolate Gold Hill Divide no witness was left but me, the victim. Those old fools last night laughed till they cried over the particulars of that old forgotten crime.

In still another letter he told of a very wonderful enter-

with the pipes, soiled handkerchiefs, and other articles from the old overcoat. Scott had taken special precautions against losing them.

Mark Twain regarded them a moment in silence, then he drawled:

"Well—d—n Scott. I hope his uncle's funeral will be a failure!"

The second anecdote concerns The Player egg-cups. They easily hold two eggs, but not three. One morning a new waiter came to take the breakfast order. Clemens said:

"Boy, put three soft eggs in that cup for me."

By and by the waiter returned, bringing the breakfast. Clemens looked at the egg portion and asked:

"Boy, what was my order?"

"Three soft eggs broken in the cup, Mr. Clemens."

"And you've filled that order, have you?"

"Yes, Mr. Clemens."

"Boy, you are trifling with the truth; I've been trying all winter to get three eggs into that cup."

tainment at Robert Reid's studio. There were present, he says:

Coquelin;
Richard Harding Davis;
Harrison, the great outdoor painter;
Wm. H. Chase, the artist;
Bettini, inventor of the new phonograph;
Nikola Tesla, the world-wide illustrious electrician; see article about him in Jan. or Feb. *Century*.
John Drew, actor;
James Barnes, a marvelous mimic; my, you should see him!
Smedley, the artist;
Zorn, " "
Zogbaum, " "
Reinhart, " "
Metcalf, " "
Ancona, head tenor at the Opera;
Oh, & a great lot of others. Everybody there had done something & was in his way famous.

Somebody welcomed Coquelin in a nice little French speech, John Drew did the like for me in English, & then the fun began. Coquelin did some excellent French monologues—one of them an ungrammatical Englishman telling a colorless historiette in French. It nearly killed the fifteen or twenty people who understood it.

I told a yarn, Ancona sang half a dozen songs, Barnes did his darling imitations, Harding Davis sang the hanging of Danny Deever, which was of course good, but he followed it with that most fascinating (for what reason I don't know) of all Kipling's poems, "On the Road to Mandalay," sang it tenderly, & it searched me deeper & charmed me more than the Deever.

Young Gerrit Smith played some ravishing dance-music, & we all danced about an hour. There couldn't be a pleasanter night than that one was. Some of those people complained of fatigue, but I don't seem to know what the sense of fatigue is.

In his reprieve he was like some wild thing that had regained liberty.

He refers to Susy's recent illness and to Mrs. Clemens's own poor state of health.

Dear, dear Susy! My strength reproaches me when I think of her and you.

It is an unspeakable pity that you should be without any one to go about with the girls, & it troubles me, & grieves me, & makes me curse & swear; but you see, dear heart, I've got to stick right where I am till I find out whether we are rich or whether the poorest person we are acquainted with in anybody's kitchen is better off than we are. I stand on the land-end of a spring-board, with the family clustered on the other end; if I take my foot—

He realized his hopes to her as a vessel trying to make port; once he wrote:

The ship is in sight now. . . .

When the anchor is down then I shall say:

"Farewell—a long farewell—to *business!* I will *never* touch it again!"

I will live in literature, I will wallow in it, revel in it; I will swim in ink! *Joan of Arc*—but all this is premature; the anchor is not down yet.

Sometimes he sent her impulsive cables calculating to sustain hope. Mrs. Clemens, writing to her sister in January, said:

Mr. Clemens now for ten days has been hourly expecting to send me word that Paige had signed the (new) contract, but as yet no despatch comes. . . . On the 5th of this month I received a cable, "Expect good news in ten days." On the 15th I receive a cable, "Look out for good news." On the 19th a cable, "Nearing success."

It appealed to her sense of humor even in these dark days. She added:

They make me laugh, for they are so like my beloved "Colcnel."

Mr. Rogers had agreed that he would bring Paige to rational terms, and with Clemens made a trip to Chicago. All agreed now that the machine promised a certain fortune as soon as a contract acceptable to everybody could be concluded—Paige and his lawyer being the last to dally and dicker as to terms. Finally a telegram came from Chicago saying that Paige had agreed to terms. On that day Clemens wrote in his note-book:

> This is a great date in my history. Yesterday we were paupers with but 3 months' rations of cash left and $160,000 in debt, my wife & I, but this telegram makes us wealthy.

It was not until a fortnight later that Paige did actually sign. This was on the 1st of February, '94, and Clemens that night cabled to Paris, so that Mrs. Clemens would have it on her breakfast-plate the morning of their anniversary:

"Wedding news. Our ship is safe in port. I sail the moment Rogers can spare me."

So this painted bubble, this thing of emptiness, had become as substance again—the grand hope. He was as concerned with it as if it had been an actual gold-mine with ore and bullion piled in heaps—that shadow, that farce, that nightmare. One longs to go back through the years and face him to the light and arouse him to the vast sham of it all.

CLXXXVII

SOME LITERARY MATTERS

CLEMENS might have lectured that winter with profit, and Major Pond did his best to persuade him; but Rogers agreed that his presence in New York was likely to be too important to warrant any schedule of absence. He went once to Boston to lecture for charity, though his pleasure in the experience was a sufficient reward. On the evening before the lecture Mrs. James T. Fields had him to her house to dine with Dr. Holmes, then not far from the end of his long, beautiful life.[1]

Clemens wrote to Paris of their evening together:

Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes never goes out (he is in his 84th year), but he came out this time—said he wanted to "have a time" once more with me.

Mrs. Fields said Aldrich begged to come, & went away crying because she wouldn't let him. She allowed only her family (Sarah Orne Jewett & sister) to be present, because much company would overtax Dr. Holmes.

Well, he was just delightful! He did as brilliant and beautiful talking (& listening) as he ever did in his life, I guess. Fields and Jewett said he hadn't been in such splendid form for years. He had ordered his carriage for 9. The coachman sent in for him at 9, but he said, "Oh, nonsense!—leave glories & grandeurs like these? Tell him to go away & come in an hour!"

At 10 he was called for again, & Mrs. Fields, getting uneasy, rose, but he wouldn't go—& so we rattled ahead the same as ever. Twice more Mrs. Fields rose, but he wouldn't go—& he

[1] He died that same year, October, 1894.

didn't go till half past 10—an unwarrantable dissipation for him in these days. He was prodigiously complimentary about some of my books, & is having *Pudd'nhead* read to him. I told him you & I used the *Autocrat* as a courting book & marked it all through, & that you keep it in the sacred green box with the love-letters, & it pleased him.

One other address Clemens delivered that winter, at Fair Haven, on the opening of the Millicent Library, a present to the town from Mrs. Rogers. Mrs. Rogers had suggested to her husband that perhaps Mr. Clemens would be willing to say a few words there. Mr. Rogers had replied, "Oh, Clemens is in trouble. I don't like to ask him," but a day or two later told him of Mrs. Rogers's wish, adding:

"Don't feel at all that you need to do it. I know just how you are feeling, how worried you are."

Clemens answered, "Mr. Rogers, do you think there is anything I could do for you that I wouldn't do?"

It was on this occasion that he told for the first time the "stolen watermelon" story, so often reprinted since; how once he had stolen a watermelon, and when he found it to be a green one, had returned it to the farmer, with a lecture on honesty, and received a ripe one in its place.

In spite of his cares and diversions Clemens's literary activities of this time were considerable. He wrote an article for the *Youth's Companion*—"How to Tell a Story"—and another for the *North American Review* on Fenimore Cooper's "Literary Offenses." Mark Twain had not much respect for Cooper as a literary artist. Cooper's stilted artificialities and slipshod English exasperated him and made it hard for him to see that in spite of these things the author of the *Deerslayer* was a mighty story-teller. Clemens had also promised some stories to Walker, of the *Cosmopolitan*, and gave him one for his Christmas number, "Traveling with a Reformer," which had grown out of some incidents of that long-ago journey

with Osgood to Chicago, supplemented by others that had happened on the more recent visit to that city with Hall. This story had already appeared when Clemens and Rogers had made their Chicago trip. Rogers had written for passes over the Pennsylvania road, and the president, replying, said:

"No, I won't give Mark Twain a pass over our road. I've been reading his 'Traveling with a Reformer,' in which he abuses our road. I wouldn't let him ride over it again if I could help it. The only way I'll agree to let him go over it at all is in my private car. I have stocked it with everything he can possibly want, and have given orders that if there is anything else he wants the train is to be stopped until they can get it."

"Pudd'nhead Wilson" was appearing in the *Century* during this period, and "Tom Sawyer Abroad" in the *St. Nicholas*. The *Century* had issued a tiny calendar of the Pudd'nhead maxims, and these quaint bits of philosophy, the very gems of Mark Twain mental riches, were in everybody's mouth. With all this going on, and with his appearance at various social events, he was rather a more spectacular figure that winter than ever before.

From the note-book:

The Haunted Looking-glass. The guest (at midnight a dim light burning) wakes up & sees appear & disappear the faces that have looked into the glass during 3 centuries.

Love seems the swiftest but is the slowest of all growths. No man and woman really know what perfect love is until they have been married a quarter of a century.

It is more trouble to make a maxim than it is to do right.

Of all God's creatures, there is only one that cannot be made the slave of the lash—that one is the cat.

Truth is stranger than fiction—to some people, but I am measurably familiar with it.

CLXXXVIII

FAILURE

IT was the first week in March before it was thought to be safe for Clemens to return to France, even for a brief visit to his family. He hurried across and remained with them what seemed an infinitesimal time, a bare three weeks, and was back again in New York by the middle of April. The Webster company difficulties had now reached an acute stage. Mr. Rogers had kept a close watch on its financial affairs, hoping to be able to pull it through or to close it without failure, paying all the creditors in full; but on the afternoon of the 16th of April, 1894, Hall arrived at Clemens's room at The Players in a panic. The Mount Morris Bank had elected a new president and board of directors, and had straightway served notice on him that he must pay his notes—two notes of five thousand dollars each in a few days—when due. Mr. Rogers was immediately notified, of course, and said he would sleep on it and advise them next day. He did not believe that the bank would really push them to the wall. The next day was spent in seeing what could be done, and by evening it was clear that unless a considerable sum of money was raised a voluntary assignment was the proper course. The end of the long struggle had come. Clemens hesitated less on his own than on his wife's account. He knew that to her the word failure would be associated with disgrace. She had pinched herself with a hundred economies to keep the business afloat, and was willing to go on economizing to avert this final disaster. Mr. Rogers said:

"Mr. Clemens, assure her from me that there is not even a tinge of disgrace in making this assignment. By doing it you will relieve yourself of a fearful load of dread, and in time will be able to pay everything and stand clear before the world. If you don't do it you will probably never be free from debt, and it will kill you and Mrs. Clemens both. If there is any disgrace it would be in *not* taking the course that will give you and her your freedom and your creditors a better chance for their claims. Most of them will be glad enough to help you."

It was on the afternoon of the next day, April 18, 1894, that the firm of Charles L. Webster & Co. executed assignment papers and closed its doors. A meeting of the creditors was called, at which H. H. Rogers was present, representing Clemens. For the most part the creditors were liberal and willing to agree to any equitable arrangement. But there were a few who were grumpy and fussy. They declared that Mark Twain should turn over his copyrights, his Hartford home, and whatever other odds and ends could be discovered. Mr. Rogers, discussing the matter in 1908, said:

"They were bent on devouring every pound of flesh in sight and picking the bones afterward, as Clemens and his wife were perfectly willing they should do. I was getting a little warm all the time at the high-handed way in which these few men were conducting the thing, and presently I got on my feet and said, 'Gentlemen, you are not going to have this thing all your way. I have something to say about Mr. Clemens's affairs. Mrs. Clemens is the chief creditor of this firm. Out of her own personal fortune she has lent it more than sixty thousand dollars. She will be a preferred creditor, and those copyrights will be assigned to her until her claim is paid in full. As for the home in Hartford, it is hers already.'

"There was a good deal of complaint, but I refused to budge. I insisted that Mrs. Clemens had the first claims

on the copyrights, though, to tell the truth, these did not promise much then, for in that hard year the sale of books was small enough. Besides Mrs. Clemens's claim the debts amounted to one hundred thousand dollars, and of course there must be a definite basis of settlement, so it was agreed that Clemens should pay fifty cents on the dollar, when the assets were finally realized upon, and receive a quittance. Clemens himself declared that sooner or later he would pay the other fifty cents, dollar for dollar, though I believe there was no one besides himself and his wife and me who believed he would ever be able to do it. Clemens himself got discouraged sometimes, and was about ready to give it up, for he was getting on in years—nearly sixty—and he was in poor health. Once when we found the debt, after the Webster salvage, was going to be at least seventy thousand dollars, he said, 'I need not dream of paying it. I never could manage it.' But he stuck to it. He was at my house a good deal at first. We gave him a room there and he came and went as he chose. The worry told upon him. He became frail during those weeks, almost ethereal, yet it was strange how brilliant he was, how cheerful."

The business that had begun so promisingly and prosperously a decade before had dwindled to its end. The last book it had in hand was *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, just ready for issue. It curiously happened that on the day of the failure copies of it were filed in Washington for copyright. Frank Bliss came over from Hartford, and Clemens arranged with him for the publication of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, thereby renewing the old relationship with the American Publishing Company after a break of a dozen years.

Naturally, the failure of Mark Twain's publishing firm made a public stir, and it showed how many and sincere were his friends, how ready they were with sympathy and help of a more material kind. Those who understood best, congratulated him on being out of the entanglement.

Poultney Bigelow, Douglas Taylor, Andrew Carnegie, Charles Dudley Warner, and others extended financial help, Bigelow and Taylor each inclosing him a check of one thousand dollars for immediate necessities. He was touched by these things, but the checks were returned. Many of his creditors sent him personal letters assuring him that he was to forget his obligation to them completely until such time as the remembering would cost him no uneasiness.

Clemens, in fact, felt relieved, now that the worst had come, and wrote bright letters home. In one he said:

> Mr. Rogers is perfectly satisfied that our course was right, absolutely right and wise—cheer up, the best is yet to come.

And again:

> Now & then a good and dear Joe Twichell or Susy Warner condoles with me & says, "Cheer up—don't be downhearted," and some other friend says, "I'm glad and surprised to see how cheerful you are & how bravely you stand it," & none of them suspect what a burden has been lifted from me & how blithe I am inside. *Except* when I think of you, dear heart—then I am not blithe; for I seem to see you grieving and ashamed, & dreading to look people in the face. For in the thick of the fight there is cheer, but you are far away & cannot hear the drum nor see the wheeling squadrons. You only seem to see rout, retreat, & dishonored colors dragging in the dirt—whereas none of these things exist. There is temporary defeat, but no dishonor—& we will march again. Charley Warner said to-day, "Sho, Livy isn't worrying. So long as she's got you and the children she doesn't care what happens. She knows it isn't her affair." Which didn't convince *me*.

Olivia Clemens wrote bravely and encouragingly to him, and more cheerfully than she felt, for in a letter to her sister she said:

> The hideous news of Webster & Co.'s failure reached me by cable on Thursday, and Friday morning *Galignani's Messenger*

had a squib about it. Of course I knew it was likely to come, but I had great hope that it would be in some way averted. Mr. Rogers was so sure there was no way out but failure that I suppose it was true. But I have a perfect *horror* and heart-sickness over it. I cannot get away from the feeling that business failure means disgrace. I suppose it always will mean that to me. We have put a great deal of money into the concern, and perhaps there would have been nothing but to keep putting it in and losing it. We certainly now have not much to lose. We might have mortgaged the house; that was the only thing I could think of to do. Mr. Clemens felt that there would never be any end, and perhaps he was right. At any rate, I know that he was convinced that it was the only thing, because when he went back he promised me that if it was possible to save the thing he would do so if only on account of my sentiment in the matter.

Sue, if you were to see me you would see that I have grown old very fast during this last year. I have wrinkled.

Most of the time I want to lie down and cry. Everything seems to me so impossible. I do not make things go very well, and I feel that my life is an absolute and irretrievable failure. Perhaps I am thankless, but I so often feel that I should like to give it up and die. However, I presume that if I could have the opportunity I should at once desire to live.

Clemens now hurried back to Paris, arriving about the middle of May, his second trip in two months. Scarcely had he got the family settled at La Bourboule-les-Bains, a quiet watering-place in the southern part of France, when a cable from Mr. Rogers, stating that the typesetter was perfected, made him decide to hurry back to America to assist in securing the new fortune. He did not go, however. Rogers wrote that the machine had been installed in the *Times-Herald* office, Chicago, for a long and thorough trial. There would be plenty of time, and Clemens concluded to rest with his family at La Bourboule-les-Bains. Later in the summer they went to Étretat, where he settled down to work.

CLXXXIX

AN EVENTFUL YEAR ENDS

THAT summer (July, '94) the *North American Review* published "In Defense of Harriet Shelley," a rare piece of literary criticism and probably the most human and convincing plea ever made for that injured, ill-fated woman. An admirer of Shelley's works, Clemens could not resist taking up the defense of Shelley's abandoned wife. It had become the fashion to refer to her slightingly, and to suggest that she had not been without blame for Shelley's behavior. A Shelley biography by Professor Dowden, Clemens had found particularly irritating. In the midst of his tangle of the previous year he had paused to give it attention. There were times when Mark Twain wrote without much sequence, digressing this way and that, as his fancy led him, charmingly and entertainingly enough, with no large, logical idea. He pursued no such method in this instance. The paper on Harriet Shelley is a brief as direct and compact and cumulative as could have been prepared by a trained legal mind of the highest order, and it has the added advantage of being the utterance of a human soul voicing an indignation inspired by human suffering and human wrong. By no means does it lack humor, searching and biting sarcasm. The characterization of Professor Dowden's Life of Shelley as a "literary cake-walk" is a touch which only Mark Twain could have laid on. Indeed, the "Defense of Harriet Shelley," with those early chapters of *Joan* at Florence, may be counted as the beginning for Mark Twain

of a genuine literary renaissance. It was to prove a remarkable period—less voluminous than the first, but even more choice, containing, as it would, besides *Joan* and the Shelley article, the rest of that remarkable series collected now as *Literary Essays;* the Hadleyburg story; "Was it Heaven or Hell?"; some masterly articles on our national policies; closing at last with those exquisite memories, in his final days.

The summer of 1894 found Mark Twain in the proper frame of mind for literary work. He was no longer in a state of dread. At Étretat, a watering-place on the French coast, he returned eagerly to the long-neglected tale of *Joan*—"a book which writes itself," he wrote Mr. Rogers—"a tale which tells itself; I merely have to hold the pen." Étretat, originally a fishing-village, was less pretentious than to-day, and the family had taken a small furnished cottage a little way back from the coast—a charming place, and a cheap one—as became their means. Clemens worked steadily at Étretat for more than a month, finishing the second part of his story, then went over to Rouen to visit the hallowed precincts where Joan dragged out those weary months that brought her to the stake. Susy Clemens was taken ill at Rouen, and they lingered in that ancient city, wandering about its venerable streets, which have been changed but slowly by the centuries, and are still full of memories.

They returned to Paris at length—to the Brighton, their quarters of the previous winter—but presently engaged for the winter the studio home of the artist Pomroy at 169 rue de l'Université, beyond the Seine. Mark Twain wrote of it once:

> It was a lovely house; large, rambling, quaint, charmingly furnished and decorated, built upon no particular plan, delightfully uncertain and full of surprises. You were always getting lost in it, and finding nooks and corners which you did not

know were there and whose presence you had not suspected before. It was built by a rich French artist, and he had also furnished it and decorated it himself. The studio was coziness itself. With us it served as a drawing-room, sitting-room, living-room, dancing-room—we used it for everything. We couldn't get enough of it. It is odd that it should have been so cozy, for it was 40 feet long, 40 feet high, and 30 feet wide, with a vast fireplace on each side, in the middle, and a musicians' gallery at one end.

Mrs. Clemens had hoped to return to America, to their Hartford home. That was her heart's desire—to go back once more to their old life and fireside, to forget all this period of exile and wandering. Her letters were full of her home-longing; her three years of absence seemed like an eternity.

In its way, the Pomroy house was the best substitute for home they had found. Its belongings were of the kind she loved. Susy had better health, and her husband was happy in his work. They had much delightful and distinguished company. Her letters tell of these attractive things, and of their economies to make their income reach.

It was near the end of the year that the other great interest—the machine—came finally to a conclusion. Reports from the test had been hopeful during the summer. Early in October Clemens, receiving a copy of the *Times-Herald*, partly set by the machine, wrote: "The *Herald* has just arrived, and that column is healing for sore eyes. It affects me like Columbus sighting land." And again on the 28th:

> It seems to me that things couldn't well be going better at Chicago than they are. There's no other machine that can set type eight hours with only seventeen minutes' stoppage through cussedness. The others do rather more stopping than working. By and by our machines will be perfect; then they won't stop at all.

But that was about the end of the good news. The stoppages became worse and worse. The type began to break—the machine had its old trouble: it was too delicately adjusted—too complicated.

"Great guns, what is the matter with it?" wrote Clemens in November when he received a detailed account of its misconduct.

Mr. Rogers and his son-in-law, Mr. Broughton, went out to Chicago to investigate. They went to the *Times-Herald* office to watch the type-setter in action. To the writer of these chapters Mr. Rogers once gave an account of this visit. He said:

"Certainly it was a marvelous invention. It was the nearest approach to a human being in the wonderful things it could do of any machine I have ever known. But that was just the trouble; it was too much of a human being and not enough of a machine. It had all the complications of the human mechanism, all the liability of getting out of repair, and it could not be replaced with the ease and immediateness of the human being. It was too costly; too difficult of construction; too hard to set up. I took out my watch and timed its work and counted its mistakes. We watched it a long time, for it was most interesting, most fascinating, but it was not practical—that to me was clear."

It had failed to stand the test. The *Times-Herald* would have no more of it. Mr. Rogers himself could see the uselessness of the endeavor. He instructed Mr. Broughton to close up the matter as best he could and himself undertook the harder task of breaking the news to Mark Twain. His letters seem not to have been preserved, but the replies to them tell the story.

169 rue de l'Université,
PARIS, *December 22, 1894.*

DEAR MR. ROGERS,—I *seemed* to be entirely expecting your letter, and also prepared and resigned; but Lord, it shows how

little we know ourselves and how easily we can deceive ourselves. It hit me like a thunder-clap. It knocked every rag of sense out of my head, and I went flying here and there and yonder, not knowing what I was doing, and only one clearly defined thought standing up visible and substantial out of the crazy storm-drift—that my dream of ten years was in desperate peril and out of the 60,000 or 70,000 projects for its rescue that came flocking through my skull not one would hold still long enough for me to examine it and size it up. Have you ever been like that? Not so much, I reckon.

There was another clearly defined idea—I must be there and see it die. That is, if it must die; and maybe if I were there we might hatch up some next-to-impossible way to make it take up its bed and take a walk.

So, at the end of four hours I started, still whirling, and walked over to the rue Scribe—4 P.M.—and asked a question or two and was told I should be running a big risk if I took the 9 P.M. train for London and Southampton; "better come right along at 6.52 per Havre special and step aboard the New York all easy and comfortable." Very! and I about two miles from home and no packing done.

Then it occurred to me that none of these salvation notions that were whirlwinding through my head could be examined or made available unless at least a month's time could be secured. So I cabled you, and said to myself that I would take the French steamer to-morrow (which will be Sunday).

By bedtime Mrs. Clemens had reasoned me into a fairly rational and contented state of mind; but of course it didn't last long. So I went on thinking—mixing it with a smoke in the dressing-room once an hour—until dawn this morning. Result—a sane resolution; no matter what your answer to my cable might be I would hold still and not sail until I should get an answer to this present letter which I am now writing or a cable answer from you saying "Come" or "Remain."

I have slept 6 hours, my pond has clarified, and I find the sediment of my 70,000 projects to be of this character:

He follows with a detailed plan for reconstructing the machine, using brass type, etc., and concludes:

Don't say I'm wild. For really I'm sane again this morning. I am going right along with *Joan* now, and wait untroubled till I hear from you. If you think I can be of the least use cable me "Come." I can write *Joan* on board ship and lose no time. Also I could discuss my plan with the publisher for a *de luxe Joan*, time being an object, for some of the pictures could be made over here, cheaply and quickly, that would cost much more time and money in America.

The second letter followed five days later:

169 rue de l'Université,
PARIS, *December 27, 1894.*

DEAR MR. ROGERS,—Notwithstanding your heart is "old and hard" you make a body choke up. I *know* you "mean every word you say" and I do take it "in the same spirit in which you tender it." I shall keep your regard while we two live—that I know; for I shall always remember what you have done for me, and that will insure me against ever doing anything that could forfeit it or impair it.

It is six days or seven days ago that I lived through that despairing day, and then through a night without sleep; then settled down next day into my right mind (or thereabouts) and wrote you. I put in the rest of that day till 7 P.M. plenty comfortably enough writing a long chapter of my book; then went to a masked ball blacked up as Uncle Remus, taking Clara along, and we had a good time. I have lost no day since, and suffered no discomfort to speak of, but drove my troubles out of my mind and had good success in keeping them out—through watchfulness. I have done a good week's work and put the book a good way ahead in the Great Trial [of Joan], which is the difficult part; the part which requires the most thought and carefulness. I cannot see the end of the Trial yet, but I am on the road. I am creeping surely toward it.

"Why not leave them all to me?" My business bothers? I take you by the hand! I jump at the chance!

I ought to be ashamed and I am trying my best to *be* ashamed —and yet I do jump at the chance in spite of it. I don't want to write Irving and I don't want to write Stoker. It doesn't

seem as if I *could*. But I can suggest something for *you* to write them; and then if you see that I am unwise you can write them something quite different. Now this is my idea:

1. To return Stoker's $100 to him and keep his stock.

2. And tell Irving that when luck turns with me I will make good to him what the salvage from the dead Co. fails to pay him of his $500.

[*P. S.* Madam says *No*, I must face the music. So I inclose my effort—to be used if you approve, but not otherwise.[1]]

We shall try to find a tenant for our Hartford house; not an easy matter, for it costs heavily to live in. We can never live in it again; though it would break the family's hearts if they could believe it.

Nothing daunts Mrs. Clemens or makes the world look black to her—which is the reason I haven't drowned myself.

I got the Xmas journals which you sent and I thank you for that Xmas remembrance.

We all send our deepest and warmest greetings to you and all of yours and a Happy New Year!

S. L. CLEMENS.

[1] Bram Stoker and Sir Henry Irving had each taken a small interest in the machine. The inclosure for Stoker ran as follows:

MY DEAR STOKER,—I am not dating this, because it is not to be mailed at present.

When it reaches you it will mean that there is a hitch in my machine enterprise—a hitch so serious as to make it take to itself the aspect of a dissolved dream. This letter, then, will contain cheque for the $100 which you have paid. And will you tell Irving for me—I can't get up courage enough to talk about this misfortune myself, except to you, whom by good luck I haven't damaged yet—that when the wreckage presently floats ashore he will get a good deal of his $500 back; and a dab at a time I will make up to him the rest.

I'm not feeling as fine as I was when I saw you there in your home. Please remember me kindly to Mrs. Stoker. I gave up that London lecture-project entirely. Had to—there's never been a chance since to find the time.

Sincerely yours,

S. L. CLEMENS.

A week later he added what was about his final word on the subject:

Yours of December 21 has arrived, containing the circular to stockholders, and I guess the Co. will really quit—there doesn't seem to be any other wise course.

There's one thing which makes it difficult for me to soberly realize that my ten-year dream is actually dissolved; and that is that it reverses my horoscope. The proverb says, "Born lucky, *always* lucky. It was usual for one or two of our lads (per annum) to get drowned in the Mississippi or in Bear Creek, but I was pulled out in a ⅔ drowned condition 9 times before I learned to swim, and was considered to be a cat in disguise. When the *Pennsylvania* blew up and the telegraph reported my brother as fatally injured (with 60 others) but made no mention of me, my uncle said to my mother "it means that Sam was somewhere else, after being on that boat a year and a half—he was born lucky." Yes, I *was* somewhere else. I am so superstitious that I have always been afraid to have business dealings with certain relatives and friends of mine because they were unlucky people. All my life I have stumbled upon lucky chances of large size, and whenever they were wasted it was because of my own stupidity and carelessness. And so I have felt entirely certain that the machine would turn up trumps eventually. It disappointed me lots of times, but I couldn't shake off the confidence of a lifetime in my luck.

Well, whatever I get out of the wreckage will be due to good luck—the good luck of getting you into the scheme—for, but for that there wouldn't *be* any wreckage; it would be total loss.

I wish you had been in at the beginning. Then we should have had the good luck to step promptly ashore.

So it was that the other great interest died and was put away forever. Clemens scarcely ever mentioned it again, even to members of his family. It was a dead issue; it was only a pity that it had ever seemed a live one. A combination known as the Regius Company took over Paige's interest, but accomplished nothing. Eventually—irony of fate—the Mergenthaler Company, so long scorned and

derided, for twenty thousand dollars bought out the rights and assets and presented that marvelous work of genius, the mechanical wonder of the age, to the Sibley College of Engineering, where it is shown as the costliest piece of machinery, for its size, ever constructed. Mark Twain once received a letter from an author who had written a book calculated to assist inventors and patentees, asking for his indorsement. He replied:

DEAR SIR,—I have, as you say, been interested in patents and patentees. If your books tell how to exterminate inventors send me nine editions. Send them by express.

Very truly yours,
S. L. CLEMENS.

The collapse of the "great hope" meant to the Clemens household that their struggle with debt was to continue, that their economies were to become more rigid. In a letter on her wedding anniversary, February 2 (1895), Mrs. Clemens wrote to her sister:

As I was starting down the stairs for my breakfast this morning Mr. Clemens called me back and took out a five-franc piece and gave it to me, saying: "It is our silver-wedding day, and so I give you a present."

It was a symbol of their reduced circumstances—of the change that twenty-five years had brought.

Literary matters, however, prospered. The new book progressed amazingly. The worst had happened; other and distracting interests were dead. He was deep in the third part—the story of Joan's trial and condemnation, and he forgot most other things in his determination to make that one a reality.

As at Viviani, Clemens read his chapters to the family circle. The story was drawing near the end now; tragedy was closing in on the frail martyr; the farce of her trial was wringing their hearts. Susy would say, "Wait, wait

till I get a handkerchief," and one night when the last pages had been written and read, and Joan had made the supreme expiation for devotion to a paltry king, Susy wrote in her diary, "To-night Joan of Arc was burned at the stake," meaning that the book was finished.

Susy herself had literary taste and might have written had it not been that she desired to sing. There are fragments of her writing that show the true literary touch. Her father, in an unpublished article which he once wrote of her, quoted a paragraph, doubtless intended some day to take its place at the end of a story:

> And now at last when they lie at rest they must go hence. It is always so. Completion, perfection, satisfaction attained—a human life has fulfilled its earthly destiny. Poor human life! It may not pause and rest, for it must hasten on to other realms and greater consummations.

She was a deep reader, and she had that wonderful gift —brilliant, flowing, scintillating speech. From her father she had inherited a rare faculty of oral expression, born of a superior depth of mind, swiftness and clearness of comprehension, combined with rapid, vivid, and forceful phrasing. Her father wrote of her gift:

> Sometimes in those days of swift development her speech was rocket-like for vividness and for the sense it carried of visibility. I seem to see it stream into the sky and burst full in a shower of colored fire.

We are dwelling here a moment on Susy, for she was at her best that winter.

She was more at home than the others. Her health did not permit her to go out so freely and her father had more of her companionship. They discussed many things —the problems of life and those beyond life, philosophies of many kinds, and the subtleties of literary art. He recalled long after how once they lost themselves in trying to

solve the emotional mystery of certain word-combinations —certain phrases, or lines—as, for instance, the yearning glance backward toward the morning of life that one feels in "the days when we went gipsying a long time ago," and the tender, sunlit, grassy slope and forgotten graves suggested by the simple words, "departed this life." Both Susy and her father cared more for *Joan* than any of the former books. To Mr. Rogers, Clemens wrote:

"Possibly the book may not sell, but that is nothing—it was written for love." A memorandum which he made at the time, apparently for no one but himself, brings us very close to the personality behind it.

Do you know that shock? I mean when you come at your regular hour into the sick-room where you have watched for months and find the medicine-bottles all gone, the night-table removed, the bed stripped, the furniture set stiffly to rights, the windows up, the room cold, stark, vacant—& you catch your breath & realize what has happened.

Do you know that shock?

The man who has written a long book has that experience the morning after he has revised it for the last time & sent it away to the printer. He steps into his study at the hour established by the habit of months—& he gets that little shock. All the litter & confusion are gone. The piles of dusty reference-books are gone from the chairs, the maps from the floor; the chaos of letters, manuscripts, note-books, paper-knives, pipes, matches, photographs, tobacco-jars, & cigar-boxes is gone from the writing-table, the furniture is back where it used to be in the long-ago. The housemaid, forbidden the place for five months, has been there & tidied it up & scoured it clean & made it repellent & awful.

I stand here this morning contemplating this desolation, & I realize that if I would bring back the spirit that made this hospital home-like & pleasant to me I must restore the aids to lingering dissolution to their wonted places & nurse another patient through & send it forth for the last rites, with many or few to assist there, as may happen; & that I will do.

CXC

STARTING ON THE LONG TRAIL

THE tragedy of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, with its splendid illustrations by Louis Loeb, having finished its course in the *Century Magazine*, had been issued by the American Publishing Company. It proved not one of Mark Twain's great books, but only one of his good books. From first to last it is interesting, and there are strong situations and chapters finely written. The character of Roxy is thoroughly alive, and her weird relationship with her half-breed son is startling enough. There are not many situations in fiction stronger than that where half-breed Tom sells his mother down the river into slavery. The negro character is well drawn, of course—Mark Twain could not write it less than well, but its realism is hardly to be compared with similar matter in his other books—in *Tom Sawyer*, for instance, or *Huck Finn*. With the exceptions of Tom, Roxy, and Pudd'nhead the characters are slight. The Twins are mere bodiless names that might have been eliminated altogether. The character of Pudd'nhead Wilson is lovable and fine, and his final triumph at the murder trial is thrilling in the extreme. Identification by thumb-marks was a new feature in fiction then—in law, too, for that matter. But it is chiefly Pudd'nhead Wilson's maxims, run at the head of each chapter, that will stick in the memory of men. Perhaps the book would live without these, but with them it is certainly immortal.

Such aphorisms as: "Nothing so needs reforming as

other people's habits"; "Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example"; "When angry count four, and when very angry swear," cannot perish; these, with the forty or so others in this volume and the added collection of rare philosophies that head the chapters of *Following the Equator*, have insured to Philosopher Pudd'nhead a respectful hearing for all time.[1]

Clemens had meant to begin another book, but he decided first to make a trip to America, to give some personal attention to publishing matters there. They were a good deal confused. The Harpers had arranged for the serial and book publication of *Joan*, and were negotiating for the Webster contracts. Mr. Rogers was devoting priceless time in an effort to establish amicable relations between the Harpers and the American Company at Hartford so that they could work on some general basis that would be satisfactory and profitable to all concerned. It was time that Clemens was on the scene of action. He sailed on the *New York* on the 23d of February, and a little more than a month later returned by the *Paris*—that is, at the end of March. By this time he had altogether a new thought. It was necessary to earn a large sum of money as promptly as possible, and he adopted the plan which twice before in his life—in 1872 and in 1884—had supplied him with needed funds. Loathing the platform as he did, he was going back to it. Major Pond had proposed a lecture tour soon after his failure.

"The loss of a fortune is tough," wrote Pond, "but there are other resources for another fortune. You and I will make the tour together."

Now he had resolved to make a tour—one that even

[1] The story of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* was dramatized by Frank Mayo, who played it successfully as long as he lived. It is by no means dead, and still pays a royalty to the Mayo and Clemens estates.

Pond himself had not contemplated. He would go platforming around the world! He would take Pond with him as far as the Pacific coast, arranging with some one equally familiar with the lecture circuit on the other side of the Pacific. He had heard of R. S. Smythe, who had personally conducted Henry M. Stanley and other great lecturers through Australia and the East, and he wrote immediately, asking information and advice concerning such a tour. Clemens himself has told us in one of his chapters how his mental message found its way to Smythe long before his written one, and how Smythe's letter, proposing just such a trip, crossed his own.

He sailed for America with the family on the 11th of May, and a little more than a week later, after four years of exile, they found themselves once more at beautiful Quarry Farm. We may imagine how happy they were to reach that peaceful haven. Mrs. Clemens had written:

"It is, in a way, hard to go home and feel that we are not able to open our house. But it is an immense delight to me to think of seeing our friends."

Little at the farm was changed. There were more vines on the home—the study was overgrown—that was all. Even Ellerslie remained as the children had left it, with all the small comforts and utensils in place. Most of the old friends were there; only Mrs. Langdon and Theodore Crane were missing. The Beechers drove up to see them, as formerly, and the old discussions on life and immortality were taken up in the old places.

Mrs. Beecher once came with some curious thin layers of leaves of stone which she had found, knowing Mark Twain's interest in geology. Later, when they had been discussing the usual problems, he said he would write an agreement on those imperishable leaves, to be laid away until the ages should solve their problems. He wrote it in verse:

If you prove right and I prove wrong,
A million years from now,
In language plain and frank and strong
My error I'll avow
To your dear waking face.

If I prove right, by God His grace,
Full sorry I shall be,
For in that solitude no trace
There'll be of you and me.

A million years, O patient stone,
You've waited for this message.
Deliver it a million hence;
(Survivor pays expressage.)

MARK TWAIN.

Contract with Mrs. T. K. Beecher, July 2, 1895.

Pond came to Elmira and the route westward was arranged. Clemens decided to give selections from his books, as he had done with Cable, and to start without much delay. He dreaded the prospect of setting out on that long journey alone, nor could Mrs. Clemens find it in her heart to consent to such a plan. It was bitterly hard to know what to do, but it was decided at last that she and one of the elder daughters should accompany him, the others remaining with their aunt at Quarry Farm. Susy, who had the choice, dreaded ocean travel, and felt that she would be happier and healthier to rest in the quiet of that peaceful hilltop. She elected to remain with her aunt and Jean; and it fell to Clara to go. Major Pond and his wife would accompany them as far as Vancouver. They left Elmira on the night of the 14th of July. When the train pulled away their last glimpse was of Susy, standing with the others under the electric light of the railway platform, waving them good-by.

CXCI

ON THE WAY AROUND THE WORLD

CLEMENS had been ill in Elmira with a distressing carbuncle, and was still in no condition to undertake steady travel and entertainment in that fierce summer heat. He was fearful of failure. "I sha'n't be able to stand on a platform," he wrote Mr. Rogers; but they pushed along steadily with few delays. They began in Cleveland, thence by the Great Lakes, traveling by steamer from one point to another, going constantly, with readings at every important point—Duluth, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Winnipeg, Butte, and through the great Northwest, arriving at Vancouver at last on August 16th, but one day behind schedule time.

It had been a hot, blistering journey, but of immense interest, for none of them had traveled through the Northwest, and the wonder and grandeur of it all, its scenery, its bigness, its mighty agriculture, impressed them. Clemens in his notes refers more than once to the "seas" and "ocean" of wheat.

There is the peace of the ocean about it and a deep contentment, a heaven-wide sense of ampleness, spaciousness, where pettiness and all small thoughts and tempers must be out of place, not suited to it, and so not intruding. The scattering, far-off homesteads, with trees about them, were so homelike and remote from the warring world, so reposeful and enticing. The most distant and faintest under the horizon suggested fading ships at sea.

The Lake travel impressed him; the beauties and cleanliness of the Lake steamers, which he compares with

those of Europe, to the disadvantage of the latter. Entering Port Huron he wrote:

> The long approach through narrow ways with flat grass and wooded land on both sides, and on the left a continuous row of summer cottages, with small-boat accommodations for visiting across the little canals from family to family, the groups of summer-dressed young people all along waving flags and handkerchiefs and firing cannon, our boat replying with toots of the hoarse whistle and now and then a cannon, and meeting steamers in the narrow way, and once the stately sister-ship of the line crowded with summer-dressed people waving—the rich browns and greens of the rush-grown, far-reaching flatlands, with little glimpses of water away on their farther edges, the sinking sun throwing a crinkled broad carpet of gold on the water—well, it is the perfection of voyaging.

It had seemed a doubtful experiment to start with Mrs. Clemens on that journey in the summer heat; but, strange to say, her health improved, and she reached Vancouver by no means unfit for the long voyage ahead. No doubt the change and continuous interest and their splendid welcome everywhere and their prosperity were accountable. Everywhere they were entertained; flowers filled their rooms; carriages and committees were always waiting. It was known that Mark Twain had set out for the purpose of paying his debts, and no cause would make a deeper appeal to his countrymen than that, or, for that matter, to the world at large.

From Winnipeg he wrote to Mr. Rogers:

> At the end of an hour and a half I offered to let the audience go, but they said "go on," and I did.

He had five thousand dollars to forward to Rogers to place against his debt account by the time he reached the Coast, a fine return for a month's travel in that deadly season. At no more than two places were the houses less

than crowded. One of these was Anaconda, then a small place, which they visited only because the manager of the entertainment hall there had known Clemens somewhere back in the sixties and was eager to have him. He failed to secure the amount of the guarantee required by Pond, and when Pond reported to Clemens that he had taken "all he had" Clemens said:

"And you took the last cent that poor fellow had. Send him one hundred dollars, and if you can't afford to stand your share charge it all to me. I'm not going around robbing my friends who are disappointed in my commercial value. I don't want to get money that way."

"I sent the money," said Pond afterward, "and was glad of the privilege of standing my share."

Clemens himself had not been in the best of health during the trip. He had contracted a heavy cold and did not seem to gain strength. But in a presentation copy of *Roughing It*, given to Pond as a souvenir, he wrote:

"Here ends one of the smoothest and pleasantest trips across the continent that any group of five has ever made."

There were heavy forest fires in the Northwest that year, and smoke everywhere. The steamer *Warrimoo*, which was to have sailed on the 16th, went aground in the smoke, and was delayed a week. While they were waiting, Clemens lectured in Victoria, with the Governor-General and Lady Aberdeen and their little son in the audience. His note-book says:

> They came in at 8.45, 15 minutes late; wish they would always be present, for it isn't permissible to begin until they come; by that time the late-comers are all in.

Clemens wrote a number of final letters from Vancouver. In one of them to Mr. J. Henry Harper, of Harper & Brothers, he expressed the wish that his name might now be printed as the author of "Joan," which had begun serially in the April *Magazine*. He thought it might help

his lecturing tour and keep his name alive. But a few days later, with Mrs. Clemens's help, he had reconsidered, and wrote:

My wife is a little troubled by my wanting my *nom de plume* put to the "Joan of Arc" so soon. She thinks it might go counter to your plans, and that you ought to be left free and unhampered in the matter.

All right—so be it. I wasn't strenuous about it, and wasn't meaning to insist; I only thought my reasons were good, and I really think so yet, though I do confess the weight and fairness of *hers*.

As a matter of fact the authorship of "Joan" had been pretty generally guessed by the second or third issue. Certain of its phrasing and humor could hardly have come from another pen than Mark Twain's. The authorship was not openly acknowledged, however, until the publication of the book, the following May.

Among the letters from Vancouver was this one to Rudyard Kipling:

Dear Kipling,—It is reported that you are about to visit India. This has moved me to journey to that far country in order that I may unload from my conscience a debt long due to you. Years ago you came from India to Elmira to visit me, as you said at the time. It has always been my purpose to return that visit & that great compliment some day. I shall arrive next January & you must be ready. I shall come riding my ayah with his tusks adorned with silver bells & ribbons & escorted by a troop of native howdahs richly clad & mounted upon a herd of wild bungalows; & you must be on hand with a few bottles of ghee, for I shall be thirsty.

To the press he gave this parting statement:

It has been reported that I sacrificed for the benefit of the creditors the property of the publishing firm whose financial backer I was and that I am now lecturing for my own benefit.

This is an error. I intend the lectures as well as the property for the creditors. The law recognizes no mortgage on a man's brain, and a merchant who has given up all he has may take advantage of the laws of insolvency and start free again for himself. But I am not a business man, and honor is a harder master than the law. It cannot compromise for less than 100 cents on the dollar and its debts never outlaw. From my reception thus far on my lecturing tour I am confident that if I live I can pay off the last debt within four years, after which, at the age of sixty-four, I can make a fresh and unincumbered start in life. I am going to Australia, India, and South Africa, and next year I hope to make a tour of the great cities of the United States. I meant, when I began, to give my creditors all the benefit of this, but I am beginning to feel that I am gaining something from it, too, and that my dividends, if not available for banking purposes, may be even more satisfactory than theirs.

There was one creditor, whose name need not be "handed down to infamy," who had refused to consent to any settlement except immediate payment in full, and had pursued with threatened attachment of earnings and belongings, until Clemens, exasperated, had been disposed to turn over to his creditors all remaining properties and let that suffice, once and for all. But this was momentary. He had presently instructed Mr. Rogers to "pay Shylock in full," and to assure the others that he would pay them, too, in the end. But none of the others annoyed him.

It was on the afternoon of August 23, 1895, that they were off at last. Major Pond and his wife lunched with them on board and waved them good-by as long as they could see the vessel. The far voyage which was to carry them for the better part of the year to the under side of the world had begun.

CXCII

"FOLLOWING THE EQUATOR"

MARK TWAIN himself has written with great fulness the story of that traveling—setting down what happened, and mainly *as* it happened, with all the wonderful description, charm, and color of which he was so great a master. We need do little more than summarize then—adding a touch here and there, perhaps, from another point of view.

They had expected to stop at the Sandwich Islands, but when they arrived in the roadstead of Honolulu, word came that cholera had broken out and many were dying daily. They could not land. It was a double disappointment; not only were the lectures lost, but Clemens had long looked forward to revisiting the islands he had so loved in the days of his youth. There was nothing for them to do but to sit on the decks in the shade of the awnings and look at the distant shore. In his book he says:

> We lay in luminous blue water; shoreward the water was green—green and brilliant; at the shore itself it broke in a long, white ruffle, and with no crash, no sound that we could hear. The town was buried under a mat of foliage that looked like a cushion of moss. The silky mountains were clothed in soft, rich splendors of melting color, and some of the cliffs were veiled in slanting mists. I recognized it all. It was just as I had seen it long before, with nothing of its beauty lost, nothing of its charm wanting.

In his note-book he wrote: "If I might, I would go ashore and never leave."

This was the 31st of August. Two days later they were off again, sailing over the serene Pacific, bearing to the southwest for Australia. They crossed the equator, which he says was wisely put where it is, because if it had been run through Europe all the kings would have tried to grab it. They crossed it September 6th, and he notes that Clara kodaked it. A day or two later the north star disappeared behind them and the constellation of the Cross came into view above the southern horizon. Then presently they were among the islands of the southern Pacific, and landed for a little time on one of the Fiji group. They had twenty-four days of halcyon voyaging between Vancouver and Sydney with only one rough day. A ship's passengers get closely acquainted on a trip of that length and character. They mingle in all sorts of diversions to while away the time; and at the end have become like friends of many years.

On the night of September 15th—a night so dark that from the ship's deck one could not see the water—schools of porpoises surrounded the ship, setting the water alive with phosphorescent splendors: "Like glorified serpents thirty to fifty feet long. Every curve of the tapering long body perfect. The whole snake dazzlingly illumined. It was a weird sight to see this sparkling ghost come suddenly flashing along out of the solid gloom and stream past like a meteor."

They were in Sydney next morning, September 16, 1895, and landed in a pouring rain, the breaking up of a fierce drought. Clemens announced that he had brought Australia good-fortune, and should expect something in return.

Mr. Smythe was ready for them and there was no time lost in getting to work. All Australia was ready for them, in fact, and nowhere in their own country were they more lavishly and royally received than in that far-away Pacific continent. Crowded houses, ovations, and gorgeous

entertainment—public and private—were the fashion, and a little more than two weeks after arrival Clemens was able to send back another two thousand dollars to apply on his debts. But he had hard luck, too, for another carbuncle developed at Melbourne and kept him laid up for nearly a week. When he was able to go before an audience again he said:

"The doctor says I am on the verge of being a sick man. Well, that may be true enough while I am lying abed all day trying to persuade his cantankerous, rebellious medicines to agree with each other; but when I come out at night and get a welcome like this I feel as young and healthy as anybody, and as to being on the verge of being a sick man I don't take any stock in that. I have been on the verge of being an angel all my life, but it's never happened yet."

In his book Clemens has told us his joy in Australia, his interest in the perishing native tribes, in the wonderfully governed cities, in the gold-mines, and in the advanced industries. The climate he thought superb; "a darling climate," he says in a note-book entry.

Perhaps one ought to give a little idea of the character of his entertainment. His readings were mainly from his earlier books, *Roughing It* and *Innocents Abroad*. The story of the dead man which, as a boy, he had discovered in his father's office was one that he often told, and the "Mexican Plug" and his "Meeting with Artemus Ward" and the story of Jim Blaine's old ram; now and again he gave chapters from *Huck Finn* and *Tom Sawyer*. He was likely to finish with that old fireside tale of his early childhood, the "Golden Arm." But he sometimes told the watermelon story, written for Mrs. Rogers, or gave extracts from *Adam's Diary*, varying his program a good deal as he went along, and changing it entirely where he appeared twice in one city.

Mrs. Clemens and Clara, as often as they had heard

him, generally went when the hour of entertainment came. They enjoyed seeing his triumph with the different audiences, watching the effect of his subtle art.

One story, the "Golden Arm," had in it a pause, an effective, delicate pause which must be timed to the fraction of a second in order to realize its full value. Somewhere before we have stated that no one better than Mark Twain knew the value of a pause. Mrs. Clemens and Clara were willing to go night after night and hear that tale time and again, for its effect on each new audience.

From Australia to New Zealand—where Clemens had his third persistent carbuncle,[1] and again lost time in consequence. It was while he was in bed with this distressing ailment that he wrote Twichell:

I think it was a good stroke of luck that knocked me on my back here at Napier instead of in some hotel in the center of a noisy city. Here we have the smooth & placidly complaining sea at our door, with nothing between us & it but 20 yards of shingle—& hardly a suggestion of life in that space to mar it or to make a noise. Away down here fifty-five degrees south of the equator this sea seems to murmur in an unfamiliar tongue—a foreign tongue—a tongue bred among the ice-fields of the antarctic—a murmur with a note of melancholy in it proper to the vast unvisited solitudes it has come from. It was very delicious and solacing to wake in the night & find it still pulsing there. I wish you were here—land, but it would be fine!

Mrs. Clemens and himself both had birthdays in New Zealand; Clemens turned sixty, and his wife passed the half-century mark.

"I do not like it one single bit," she wrote to her sister. "Fifty years old—think of it; that seems very far on."

[1] In *Following the Equator* the author says: "The dictionary says a carbuncle is a kind of jewel. Humor is out of place in a dictionary."

And Clemens wrote:

Day before yesterday was Livy's birthday (underworld time) & to-morrow will be mine. I shall be 60—no thanks for it!

From New Zealand back to Australia, and then with the new year away to Ceylon. Here they were in the Orient at last, the land of color, enchantment, and gentle races. Clemens was ill with a heavy cold when they arrived; and in fact, at no time during this long journeying was his health as good as that of his companions. The papers usually spoke of him as looking frail, and he was continually warned that he must not remain in India until the time of the great heat. He was so determined to work, however, and working was so profitable, that he seldom spared himself.

He traveled up and down and back and forth the length and breadth of India—from Bombay to Allahabad, to Benares, to Calcutta and Darjeeling, to Lahore, to Lucknow, to Delhi—old cities of romance—and to Jeypore—through the heat and dust on poor, comfortless railways, fighting his battle and enjoying it too, for he reveled in that amazing land—its gorgeous, swarming life, the patience and gentleness of its servitude, its splendid pageantry, the magic of its architecture, the maze and mystery of its religions, the wonder of its ageless story.

One railway trip he enjoyed—a thirty-five-mile flight down the steep mountain of Darjeeling in a little canopied hand-car. In his book he says:

That was the most enjoyable time I have spent in the earth. For rousing, tingling, rapturous pleasure there is no holiday trip that approaches the bird-flight down the Himalayas in a hand-car. It has no fault, no blemish, no lack, except that there are only thirty-five miles of it, instead of five hundred.

Mark Twain found India all that Rudyard Kipling had painted it and more. "INDIA THE MARVELOUS"

he printed in his note-book in large capitals, as an effort to picture his thought, and in his book he wrote:

So far as I am able to judge nothing has been left undone, either by man or Nature, to make India the most extraordinary country that the sun visits on his rounds. "Where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile."

Marvelous India is, certainly; and he saw it all to the best advantage, for government official and native grandee spared no effort to do honor to his party—to make their visit something to be remembered for a lifetime. It was all very gratifying, and most of it of extraordinary interest. There are not many visitors who get to see the inner household of a native prince of India, and the letter which Mark Twain wrote to Kumar Shri Samatsinhji, a prince of the Palitana state, at Bombay, gives us a notion of how his unostentatious, even if lavish, hospitality was appreciated.

DEAR KUMAR SAHIB,—It would be hard for me to put into words how much my family & I enjoyed our visit to your hospitable house. It was our first glimpse of the home of an Eastern Prince, & the charm of it, the grace & beauty & dignity of it realized to us the pictures which we had long ago gathered from books of travel & Oriental tales. We shall not forget that happy experience, nor your kind courtesies to us, nor those of her Highness to my wife & daughter. We shall keep always the portrait & the beautiful things you gave us; & as long as we live a glance at them will bring your house and its life & its sumptuous belongings & rich harmonies of color instantly across the years & the oceans, & we shall see them again, & how welcome they will be!

We make our salutation to your Highness & to all members of your family—including, with affectionate regard, that littlest little sprite of a Princess—& I beg to sign myself

Sincerely yours,

S. L. CLEMENS.

BENARES, *February 5, 1896.*

They had been entertained in truly royal fashion by Prince Kumar, who, after refreshments, had ordered in "bales of rich stuffs" in the true Arabian Nights fashion, and commanded his servants to open them and allow his guests to select for themselves.

With the possible exception of General Grant's long trip in '78 and '79 there has hardly been a more royal progress than Mark Twain's trip around the world. Everywhere they were overwhelmed with honors and invitations, and their gifts became so many that Mrs. Clemens wrote she did not see how they were going to carry them all. In a sense, it was like the Grant trip, for it was a tribute which the nations paid not only to a beloved personality, but to the American character and people.

The story of that East Indian sojourn alone would fill a large book, and Mark Twain, in his own way, has written that book, in the second volume of *Following the Equator*, an informing, absorbing, and enchanting story of Indian travel.

Clemens lectured everywhere to jammed houses, which were rather less profitable than in Australia, because in India the houses were not built for such audiences as he could command. He had to lecture three times in Calcutta, and then many people were turned away. At one place, however, his hall was large enough. This was in the great Hall of the Palace, where durbars are held, at Bombay.

Altogether they were two months in India, and then about the middle of March an English physician at Jeypore warned them to fly for Calcutta and get out of the country immediately before the real heat set in.

They sailed toward the end of March, touched at Madras and again at Ceylon, remaining a day or two at Colombo, and then away to sea again, across the Indian Ocean on one of those long, peaceful, eventless, tropic voyages, where at night one sleeps on deck and in daytime

wears the whitest and lightest garments and cares to do little more than sit drowsily in a steamer-chair and read and doze and dream.

From the note-book:

Here in the wastes of the Indian Ocean just under the equator the sea is blue, the motion gentle, the sunshine brilliant, the broad decks with their grouped companies of talking, reading, or game-playing folk suggestive of a big summer hotel—but outside of the ship is no life visible but the occasional flash of a flying-fish. I would like the voyage, under these conditions, to continue forever.

The Injian Ocean sits and smiles
So sof', so bright, so bloomin' blue,
There aren't a wave for miles an' miles
Excep' the jiggle of the screw. —KIP.

How curiously unanecdotical the colonials and the ship-going English are—I believe I haven't told an anecdote or heard one since I left America, but Americans when grouped drop into anecdotes as soon as they get a little acquainted.

Preserve your illusions. When they are gone you may still exist, but not live.

Swore off from profanity early this morning—I was on deck in the peaceful dawn, the calm of holy dawn. Went down, dressed, bathed, put on white linen, shaved—a long, hot, troublesome job and no profanity. Then started to breakfast. Remembered my tonic—first time in 3 months without being told—poured it into measuring-glass, held bottle in one hand, it in the other, the cork in my teeth—reached up & got a tumbler —measuring-glass slipped out of my fingers—caught it, poured out another dose, first setting the tumbler on wash-stand—just got it poured, ship lurched, heard a crash behind me—it was the tumbler, broken into millions of fragments, but the bottom hunk whole. Picked it up to throw out of the open port, threw out the measuring-glass instead—then I released my voice. Mrs. Clemens behind me in the door.

"Don't reform any more. It is not an improvement."

This is a good time to read up on scientific matters and improve the mind, for about us is the peace of the great deep. It invites to dreams, to study, to reflection. Seventeen days ago this ship sailed out of Calcutta, and ever since, barring a day or two in Ceylon, there has been nothing in sight but the tranquil blue sea & a cloudless blue sky. All down the Bay of Bengal it was so. It is still so in the vast solitudes of the Indian Ocean—17 days of heaven. In 11 more it will end. There will be one passenger who will be sorry. One reads all day long in this delicious air. To-day I have been storing up knowledge from Sir John Lubbock about the ant. The thing which has struck me most and most astonished me is the ant's extraordinary powers of identification—memory of his friend's person. I will quote something which he says about *Formica fusca*. *Formica fusca* is not something to eat; it's the name of a breed of ants.

He does quote at great length and he transferred most of it later to his book. In another note he says:

In the past year have read *Vicar of Wakefield* and some of Jane Austen—thoroughly artificial. Have begun *Children of the Abbey*. It begins with this "Impromptu" from the sentimental heroine:

"Hail, sweet asylum of my infancy! Content and innocence reside beneath your humble roof and charity unboastful of the good it renders. . . . Here unmolested may I wait till the rude storm of sorrow is overblown and my father's arms are again extended to receive me."

Has the ear-marks of preparation.

They were at the island of Mauritius by the middle of April, that curious bit of land mainly known to the world in the romance of *Paul and Virginia*, a story supposed by some in Mauritius to be "a part of the Bible." They rested there for a fortnight and then set sail for South Africa on the ship *Arundel Castle*, which he tells us is the finest boat he has seen in those waters.

It was the end of the first week in May when they reached Durban and felt that they were nearing home.

One more voyage and they would be in England, where they had planned for Susy and Jean to join them.

Mrs. Clemens, eager for letters, writes of her disappointment in not finding one from Susy. The reports from Quarry Farm had been cheerful, and there had been small snap-shot photographs which were comforting, but her mother heart could not be entirely satisfied that Susy did not send letters. She had a vague fear that some trouble, some illness, had come to Susy which made her loath to write. Susy was, in fact, far from well, though no one, not even Susy herself, suspected how serious was her condition.

Mrs. Clemens writes of her own hopefulness, but adds that her husband is often depressed.

Mr. Clemens has not as much courage as I wish he had, but, poor old darling, he has been pursued with colds and inabilities of various sorts. Then he is so impressed with the fact that he is sixty years old. Naturally I combat that thought all I can, trying to make him rejoice that he is not seventy. . . .

He does not believe that any good thing will come, but that we must all our lives live in poverty. He says he never wants to go back to America. I cannot think that things are as black as he paints them, and I trust that if I get him settled down for work in some quiet English village he will get back much of his cheerfulness; in fact, I believe he will because that is what he wants to do, and that is the work that he loves. The platform he likes for the two hours that he is on it, but all the rest of the time it grinds him, and he says he is ashamed of what he is doing. Still, in spite of this sad undercurrent, we are having a delightful trip. People are so nice, and with people Mr. Clemens seems cheerful. Then the ocean trips are a great rest to him.

Mrs. Clemens and Clara remained at the hotel in Durban while Clemens made his platform trip to the South African cities. It was just at the time when the Transvaal invasion had been put down—when the Jameson raid had come to grief and John Hayes Hammond, chief of the

reformers, and fifty or more supporters were lying in the jail at Pretoria under various sentences, ranging from one to fifteen years, Hammond himself having received the latter award. Mrs. Hammond was a fellow-Missourian; Clemens had known her in America. He went with her now to see the prisoners, who seemed to be having a pretty good time, expecting to be pardoned presently; pretending to regard their confinement mainly as a joke. Clemens, writing of it to Twichell, said:

A Boer guard was at my elbow all the time, but was courteous & polite, only he barred the way in the compound (quadrangle or big open court) & wouldn't let me cross a white mark that was on the ground—the "death-line," one of the prisoners called it. Not in earnest, though, I think. I found that I had met Hammond once when he was a Yale senior & a guest of General Franklin's. I also found that I had known Captain Mein intimately 32 years ago. One of the English prisoners had heard me lecture in London 23 years ago. . . .

These prisoners are strong men, prominent men, & I believe they are all educated men. They are well off; some of them are wealthy. They have a lot of books to read, they play games & smoke, & for a while they will be able to bear up in their captivity; but not for long, not for very long, I take it. I am told they have times of deadly brooding and depression. I made them a speech—sitting down. It just happened so. I don't prefer that attitude. Still, it has one advantage—it is only a *talk*, it doesn't take the form of a speech. . . . I advised them at considerable length to stay where they were—they would get used to it & like it presently; if they got out they would only get in again somewhere else, by the look of their countenances; & I promised to go and see the President & do what I could to get him to double their jail terms. . . .

We had a very good sociable time till the permitted time was up & a little over & we outsiders had to go. I went again to-day, but the Rev. Mr. Gray had just arrived, & the warden, a genial, elderly Boer named Du Plessis, explained that his orders wouldn't allow him to admit saint & sinner at the same time, particularly on a Sunday. Du Plessis descended from the Huguenot fugi-

tives, you see, of 200 years ago—but he hasn't any French left in him now—all Dutch.

Clemens did visit President Kruger a few days later, but not for the purpose explained. John Hayes Hammond, in a speech not long ago (1911), told how Mark Twain was interviewed by a reporter after he left the jail, and when the reporter asked if the prisoners were badly treated Clemens had replied that he didn't think so, adding:

"As a matter of fact, a great many of these gentlemen have fared far worse in the hotels and mining-camps of the West."

Said Hammond in his speech: "The result of this was that the interview was reported literally and a leader appeared in the next morning's issue protesting against such lenience. The privations, already severe enough, were considerably augmented by that remark, and it required some three or four days' search on the part of some of our friends who were already outside of jail to get hold of Mark Twain and have him go and explain to Kruger that it was all a joke."

Clemens made as good a plea to "Oom Paul" as he could, and in some degree may have been responsible for the improved treatment and the shortened terms of the unlucky reformers.

They did not hurry away from South Africa. Clemens gave many readings and paid a visit to the Kimberley mines. His note-book recalls how poor Riley twenty-five years before had made his fatal journey.

It was the 14th of July, 1896, a year to a day since they left Elmira, that they sailed by the steamer *Norman* for England, arriving at Southampton the 31st. It was from Southampton that they had sailed for America fourteen months before. They had completed the circuit of the globe.

CXCIII

THE PASSING OF SUSY

IT had been arranged that Katie Leary should bring Jean and Susy to England. It was expected that they would arrive soon, not later than the 12th, by which time the others would be established. The travelers proceeded immediately to London and engaged for the summer a house in Guildford, modest quarters, for they were still economizing, though Mark Twain had reason to hope that with the money already earned and the profits of the book he would write of his travels he could pay himself free. Altogether, the trip had been prosperous. Now that it was behind him, his health and spirits had improved. The outlook was brighter.

August 12th came, but it did not bring Katie and the children. A letter came instead. Clemens long afterward wrote:

It explained that Susy was slightly ill—nothing of consequence. But we were disquieted and began to cable for later news. This was Friday. All day no answer—and the ship to leave Southampton next day at noon. Clara and her mother began packing, to be ready in case the news should be bad. Finally came a cablegram saying, "Wait for cablegram in the morning." This was not satisfactory—not reassuring. I cabled again, asking that the answer be sent to Southampton, for the day was now closing. I waited in the post-office that night till the doors were closed, toward midnight, in the hope that good news might still come, but there was no message. We sat silent at home till one in the morning waiting—waiting for

we knew not what. Then we took the earlier morning train, and when we reached Southampton the message was there. It said the recovery would be long but certain. This was a great relief to me, but not to my wife. She was frightened. She and Clara went aboard the steamer at once and sailed for America to nurse Susy. I remained behind to search for another and larger house in Guildford.

That was the 15th of August, 1896. Three days later, when my wife and Clara were about half-way across the ocean, I was standing in our dining-room, thinking of nothing in particular, when a cablegram was put into my hand. It said, "Susy was peacefully released to-day."

Some of those who in later years wondered at Mark Twain's occasional attitude of pessimism and bitterness toward all creation, when his natural instinct lay all the other way, may find here some reasons in his logic of gloom. For years he and his had been fighting various impending disasters. In the end he had torn his family apart and set out on a weary pilgrimage to pay, for long financial unwisdom, a heavy price—a penance in which all, without complaint, had joined. Now, just when it seemed about ended, when they were ready to unite and be happy once more, when he could hold up his head among his fellows—in this moment of supreme triumph had come the message that Susy's lovely and blameless life was ended. There are not many greater dramas in fiction or in history than this. The wonder is not that Mark Twain so often preached the doctrine of despair during his later life, but that he did not exemplify it—that he did not become a misanthrope in fact.

Mark Twain's life had contained other tragedies, but no other that equaled this one. This time none of the elements were lacking—not the smallest detail. The dead girl had been his heart's pride; it was a year since he had seen her face, and now by this word he knew that he would never see it again. The blow had found him alone—

absolutely alone among strangers—those others half-way across the ocean, drawing nearer and nearer to it, and he with no way to warn them, to prepare them, to comfort them.

Clemens sought no comfort for himself. Just as nearly forty years before he had writhed in self-accusation for the death of his younger brother, and as later he held himself to blame for the death of his infant son, so now he crucified himself as the slayer of Susy. To Mrs. Clemens he poured himself out in a letter in which he charged himself categorically as being wholly and solely responsible for the tragedy, detailing step by step with fearful reality his mistakes and weaknesses which had led to their downfall, the separation from Susy, and this final incredible disaster. Only a human being, he said, could have done these things.

Susy Clemens had died in the old Hartford home. She had been well for a time at Quarry Farm, well and happy, but during the summer of '96 she had become restless, nervous, and unlike herself in many ways. Her health seemed to be gradually failing, and she renewed the old interest in mental science, always with the approval of her parents. Clemens had great faith in mind over matter, and Mrs. Clemens also believed that Susy's high-strung nature was especially calculated to receive benefit from a serene and confident mental attitude. From Bombay, in January, she wrote Mrs. Crane:

> I am very glad indeed that Susy has taken up Mental Science, and I do hope it may do her as much good as she hopes. Last winter we were so very anxious to have her get hold of it, and even felt at one time that we must go to America on purpose to have her have the treatment, so it all seems very fortunate that it should have come about as it has this winter.

Just how much or how little Susy was helped by this treatment cannot be known. Like Stevenson, she had "a soul of flame in a body of gauze," a body to be guarded through the spirit. She worked continuously at her sing-

ing and undoubtedly overdid herself. Early in the year she went over to Hartford to pay some good-by visits, remaining most of the time in the home of Charles Dudley Warner, working hard at her singing. Her health did not improve, and when Katie Leary went to Hartford to arrange for their departure she was startled at the change in her.

"Miss Susy, you are sick," she said. "You must have the doctor come."

Susy refused at first, but she grew worse and the doctor was sent for. He thought her case not very serious—the result, he said, of overwork. He prescribed some soothing remedies, and advised that she be kept very quiet, away from company, and that she be taken to her own home, which was but a step away. It was then that the letter was written and the first cable sent to England. Mrs. Crane was summoned from Elmira, also Charles Langdon. Mr. Twichell was notified and came down from his summer place in the Adirondacks.

Susy did not improve. She became rapidly worse, and a few days later the doctor pronounced her ailment meningitis. This was on the 15th of August—that hot, terrible August of 1896. Susy's fever increased and she wandered through the burning rooms in delirium and pain; then her sight left her, an effect of the disease. She lay down at last, and once, when Katie Leary was near her, she put her hands on Katie's face and said, "mama." She did not speak after that, but sank into unconsciousness, and on the evening of Tuesday, August 18th, the flame went out forever.

To Twichell Clemens wrote of it:

Ah, well, Susy died at *home*. She had that privilege. Her dying eyes rested upon no thing that was strange to them, but only upon things which they had known & loved always & which had made her young years glad; & she had you & Sue & Katie & & John & Ellen. This was happy fortune—I am thankful that it was vouchsafed to her. If she had died in another house—well, I think I could not have borne that. To us our house was

not unsentient matter—it had a heart & a soul & eyes to see us with, & approvals & solicitudes & deep sympathies; it was of us, & we were in its confidence, & lived in its grace & in the peace of its benediction. We never came home from an absence that its face did not light up & speak out its eloquent welcome—& we could not enter it unmoved. And could we now? oh, now, in spirit we should enter it unshod.

A tugboat with Dr. Rice, Mr. Twichell, and other friends of the family went down the bay to meet the arriving vessel with Mrs. Clemens and Clara on board. It was night when the ship arrived, and they did not show themselves until morning; then at first to Clara. There had been little need to formulate a message—their presence there was enough—and when a moment later Clara returned to the stateroom her mother looked into her face and she also knew. Susy already had been taken to Elmira, and at half past ten that night Mrs. Clemens and Clara arrived there by the through train—the same train and in the same coach which they had taken one year and one month before on their journey westward around the world.

And again Susy was there, not waving her welcome in the glare of the lights as she had waved her farewell to us thirteen months before, but lying white and fair in her coffin in the house where she was born.

They buried her with the Langdon relatives and the little brother, and ordered a headstone with some lines which they had found in Australia:

> Warm summer sun shine kindly here;
> Warm southern wind blow softly here;
> Green sod above lie light, lie light—
> Good night, dear heart, good night, good night.[1]

[1] These lines at first were generally attributed to Clemens himself. When this was reported to him he ordered the name of the Australian poet, Robert Richardson, cut beneath them. The word "southern" in the original read "northern," as in Australia the warm wind is from the north. Richardson died in England in 1901.

CXCIV

WINTER IN TEDWORTH SQUARE

MRS. CLEMENS, Clara, and Jean, with Katie Leary, sailed for England without delay. Arriving there, they gave up the house in Guildford, and in a secluded corner of Chelsea, on the tiny and then almost unknown Tedworth Square (No. 23), they hid themselves away for the winter. They did not wish to be visited; they did not wish their whereabouts known except to a few of their closest friends. They wanted to be alone with their sorrow, and not a target for curious attention. Perhaps not a dozen people in London knew their address and the outside world was ignorant of it altogether. It was through this that a wild report started that Mark Twain's family had deserted him—that ill and in poverty he was laboring alone to pay his debts. This report—exploited in five-column head-lines by a hyper-hysterical paper of that period—received wide attention.

James Ross Clemens, of the St. Louis branch, a nephew of Frau von Versen, was in London just then, and wrote at once, through Chatto & Windus, begging Mark Twain to command his relative's purse. The reply to this kind offer was an invitation to tea, and "Young Doctor Jim," as he was called, found his famous relative by no means abandoned or in want, but in pleasant quarters, with his family still loyal. The general impression survived, however, that Mark Twain was sorely pressed, and the New York *Herald* headed a public benefit fund for the payment of his debts. The *Herald* subscribed one thousand

dollars on its own account, and Andrew Carnegie followed with another thousand, but the enterprise was barely under way when Clemens wrote a characteristic letter, in which he declared that while he would have welcomed the help offered, being weary of debt, his family did not wish him to accept aid so long as he was able to take care of them through his own efforts.

Meantime he was back into literary harness; a note-book entry for October 24, 1896, says:

"Wrote the first chapter of the book to-day—*Around the World.*"

He worked at it uninterruptedly, for in work there was respite, though his note-books show something of his mental torture, also his spiritual heresies. His series of mistakes and misfortunes, ending with the death of Susy, had tended to solidify his attitude of criticism toward things in general and the human race in particular.

"Man is the only animal that blushes, or that needs to," was one of his maxims of this period, and in another place he sets down the myriad diseases which human flesh is heir to and his contempt for a creature subject to such afflictions and for a Providence that could invent them. Even Mrs. Clemens felt the general sorrow of the race. "Poor, poor human nature," she wrote once during that long, gloomy winter.

Many of Mark Twain's notes refer to Susy. In one he says:

"I did not hear her glorious voice at its supremest—that was in Hartford a month or two before the end."

Notes of heavy regret most of them are, and self-reproach and the hopelessness of it all. In one place he records her accomplishment of speech, adding:

"And I felt like saying 'you marvelous child,' but never said it; to my sorrow I remember it now. But I come of an undemonstrative race."

He wrote to Twichell:

But I have this consolation: that dull as I was I always knew enough to be proud when she commended me or my work—as proud as if Livy had done it herself—& I took it as the accolade from the hand of genius. I see now—as Livy always saw—that she had greatness in her, & that she herself was dimly conscious of it.

And now she is dead—& I can never tell her.

And closing a letter to Howells:

Good-by. Will healing ever come, or life have value again? And shall we see Susy? Without doubt! without a *shadow* of doubt if it can furnish opportunity to break our hearts again.

On November 26th, Thanksgiving, occurs this note:

"We did not celebrate it. Seven years ago Susy gave her play for the first time."

And on Christmas:

London, 11.30 *Xmas morning.* The Square & adjacent streets are not merely quiet, they are dead. There is not a sound. At intervals a Sunday-looking person passes along. The family have been to breakfast. We three sat & talked as usual, but the name of the day was not mentioned. It was in our minds, but we said nothing.

And a little later:

Since bad luck struck us it is risky for people to have to do with us. Our cook's sweetheart was healthy. He is rushing for the grave now. Emily, one of the maids, has lost the sight of one eye and the other is in danger. Wallace carried up coal & blacked the boots two months—has suddenly gone to the hospital—pleurisy and a bad case. We began to allow ourselves to see a good deal of our friends, the Bigelows—straightway their baby sickened & died. Next Wilson got his skull fractured.

January 23, 1897. I wish the Lord would disguise Himself in citizen's clothing & make a personal examination of the sufferings of the poor in London. He would be moved & would do something for them Himself.

CXCV

"PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF JOAN OF ARC"

MEANTIME certain publishing events had occurred. During his long voyage a number of Mark Twain's articles had appeared in the magazines, among them "Mental Telegraphy Again," in *Harpers*, and in the *North American Review* that scorching reply to Paul Bourget's reflections upon America. Clemens could criticize his own nation freely enough, but he would hardly be patient under the strictures of a Frenchman, especially upon American women.

There had been book publication also during this period. The Harpers had issued an edition of *Tom Sawyer Abroad*, which included another Tom and Huck story—"Tom Sawyer, Detective," written in Paris, and the contents of the old *White Elephant* book.

But there had been a much more important book event. The chapters of his story of *Joan* having run their course in *Harper's Magazine* had been issued as a volume.

As already mentioned, *Joan* had been early recognized as Mark Twain's work, and it was now formally acknowledged as such on the title-page. It is not certain now that the anonymous beginning had been a good thing. Those who began reading it for its lofty charm, with the first hint of Mark Twain as the author became fearful of some joke or burlesque. Some who now promptly hastened to read it as Mark Twain's, were inclined to be disappointed at the very lack of these features. When the book itself appeared the general public, still doubtful as to its merits,

gave it a somewhat dubious reception. The early sales were disappointing.

Nor were the reviewers enthusiastic, as a rule. Perhaps they did not read it over-carefully, or perhaps they were swayed a good deal by a sort of general verdict that, in attempting *Joan of Arc*, Mark Twain had gone out of his proper field. Furthermore, there were a number of *Joan* books published just then, mainly sober, somber books, in which Joan was pictured properly enough as a saint, and never as anything else—never being permitted to smile or enjoy the lighter side of life, to be a human being, in fact, at all.

But this is just the very wonder of Mark Twain's Joan. She is a saint; she is rare, she is exquisite, she is all that is lovely, and she is a human being besides. Considered from every point of view, *Joan of Arc* is Mark Twain's supreme literary expression, the loftiest, the most delicate, the most luminous example of his work. It is so from the first word of its beginning, that wonderful "Translator's Preface," to the last word of the last chapter, where he declares that the figure of Joan with the martyr's crown upon her head shall stand for patriotism through all time.

The idyllic picture of Joan's childhood with her playmates around the fairy tree is so rare in its delicacy and reality that any attempt to recall it here would disturb its bloom. The little poem, "L'Arbre fée de Bourlemont," Mark Twain's own composition, is a perfect note, and that curiously enough, for in versification he was not likely to be strong. Joan's girlhood, the picture of her father's humble cottage, the singing there by the wandering soldier of the great song of Roland which stirred her deepest soul with the love of France, Joan's heroism among her playmates, her wisdom, her spiritual ideals—are not these all reverently and nobly told, and with that touch of tenderness which only Mark Twain could give? And the story of her voices, and her march, and of her first appear-

ance before the wavering king. And then the great coronation scene at Rheims, and the dramatic moment when Joan commands the march on Paris—the dragging of the hopeless trial, and that last, fearful day of execution, what can surpass these? Nor must we forget those charming, brighter moments where Joan is shown just as a human being, laughing until the tears run at the absurdities of the paladin or the simple home prattle of her aged father and uncle. Only here and there does one find a touch—and it is never more than that—of the forbidden thing, the burlesque note which was so likely to be Mark Twain's undoing.

It seems incredible to-day that any reader, whatever his preconceived notions of the writer might have been, could have followed these chapters without realizing that this tale of Joan was a book such as had not before been written. Let any one who read it then and doubted, go back and consider it now. A surprise will await him, and it will be worth while. He will know the true personality of Joan of Arc more truly than ever before, and he will love her as the author loved her, for "the most innocent, the most lovely, the most adorable child the ages have produced."

The tale is exquisite in its workmanship. The quaint phrasing of the old Sieur de Conte is perfectly adapted to the subject-matter, and the lovely character of the old narrator himself is so perfectly maintained that we find ourselves all the time as in an atmosphere of consecration, and feel that somehow we are helping him to weave a garland to lay on Joan's tomb. Whatever the tale he tells, he is never more than a step away. We are within sound of his voice, we can touch his presence; we ride with him into battle; we laugh with him in the by-play and humors of warfare; we sit hushed at his side through the long, fearful days of the deadly trial, and when it is all ended it is to him that we turn to weep for Joan—with him only

would we mingle our tears. It is all bathed in the atmosphere of romance, but it is the ultimate of realism, too; not hard, sordid, ugly realism, but noble, spiritual, divine realism, belonging to no particular class or school —a creation apart. Not all of Mark Twain's tales have been convincing, but there is no chapter of his *Joan* that we doubt. We believe it all happened—we know that it must have happened, for our faith in the Sieur de Conté never for an instant wavers.

Aside from the personality of the book—though, in truth, one never is aside from it—the tale is a marvel in its pageantry, its splendid panorama and succession of stirring and stately scenes. The fight before Orleans, the taking of the Tourelles and of Jargeau, all the movement of that splendid march to Rheims, there are few better battle-pictures than these. Howells, always interested mainly in the realism of to-day, in his review hints at staginess in the action and setting and even in Joan herself. But Howells himself did not accept his earlier judgment as final. Five years later he wrote:

"She is indeed realized to the modern sense as few figures of the past have been realized in fiction."

As for the action, suppose we consider a brief bit of Joan's warfare. It is from the attack on the Tourelles:

Joan mounted her horse now with her staff about her, and when our people saw us coming they raised a great shout, and were at once eager for another assault on the boulevard. Joan rode straight to the foss where she had received her wound, and, standing there in the rain of bolts and arrows, she ordered the paladin to let her long standard blow free, and to note when its fringes should touch the fortress. Presently he said:

"It touches."

"Now, then," said Joan to the waiting battalions, "the place is yours—enter in! Bugles, sound the assault! Now, then—all together—go!"

And go it was. You never saw anything like it. We swarmed up the ladders and over the battlements like a wave—and the

place was our property. Why, one might live a thousand years and never see so gorgeous a thing as that again. . . .

We were busy and never heard the five cannon-shots fired, but they were fired a moment after Joan had ordered the assault; and so, while we were hammering and being hammered in the smaller fortress, the reserve on the Orleans side poured across the bridge and attacked the Tourelles from that side. A fire-boat was brought down and moored under the drawbridge which connected the Tourelles with our boulevard; wherefore, when at last we drove our English ahead of us, and they tried to cross that drawbridge and join their friends in the Tourelles, the burning timbers gave way under them and emptied them in a mass into the river in their heavy armor—and a pitiful sight it was to see brave men die such a death as that.

"God pity them!" said Joan, and wept to see that sorrowful spectacle. She said those gentle words and wept those compassionate tears, although one of those perishing men had grossly insulted her with a coarse name three days before when she had sent him a message asking him to surrender. That was their leader, Sir William Glasdale, a most valorous knight. He was clothed all in steel; so he plunged under the water like a lance, and of course came up no more.

We soon patched a sort of bridge together and threw ourselves against the last stronghold of the English power that barred Orleans from friends and supplies. Before the sun was quite down Joan's forever memorable day's work was finished, her banner floated from the fortress of the Tourelles, her promise was fulfilled, she had raised the siege of Orleans!

England had resented the *Yankee*, but it welcomed *Joan*. Andrew Lang adored it, and some years later contemplated dedicating his own book, *The Maid of France*, to Mark Twain.[1]

Brander Matthews ranks *Huck Finn* before *Joan of Arc*, but that is understandable. His literary culture and research enable him, in some measure, to comprehend the

[1] His letter proposing this dedication, received in 1909, appears to have been put aside and forgotten by Mr. Clemens, whose memory had not improved with failing health.

production of *Joan;* whereas to him *Huck* is pure magic. *Huck* is not altogether magic to those who know the West —the character of that section and the Mississippi River, especially of an older time—it is rather inspiration resulting from these existing things. *Joan* is a truer literary magic—the reconstruction of a far-vanished life and time. To reincarnate, as in a living body of the present, that marvelous child whose life was all that was pure and exalted and holy, is veritable necromancy and something more. It is the apotheosis of history.

Throughout his life Joan of Arc had been Mark Twain's favorite character in the world's history. His love for her was a beautiful and a sacred thing. He adored young maidenhood always, and nobility of character, and he was always the champion of the weak and the oppressed. The combination of these characteristics made him the ideal historian of an individuality and of a career like hers. It is fitting that in his old age (he was nearing sixty when it was finished) he should have written this marvelously beautiful thing. He could not have written it at an earlier time. It had taken him all these years to prepare for it; to become softened, to acquire the delicacy of expression, the refinement of feeling, necessary to the achievement.

It was the only book of all he had written that Mark Twain considered worthy of this dedication:

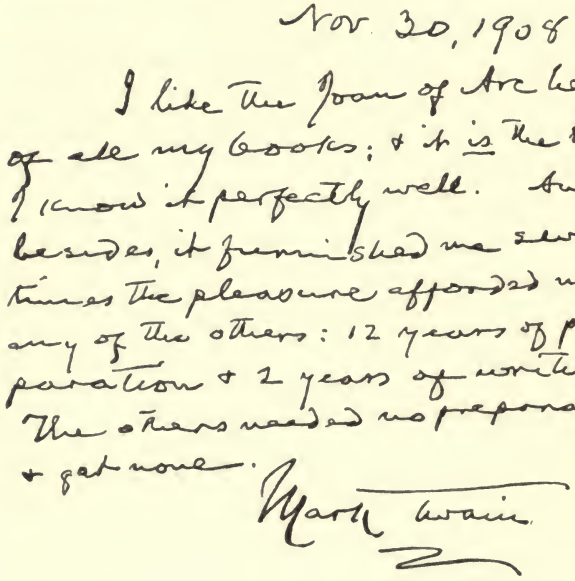
1870 TO MY WIFE 1895
OLIVIA LANGDON CLEMENS
THIS BOOK
is tendered on our wedding anniversary in grateful recognition of her twenty-five years of valued service as my literary adviser and editor.
THE AUTHOR

The Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc was a book not understood in the beginning, but to-day the public, that

always renders justice in the end, has reversed its earlier verdict. The demand for *Joan* has multiplied many fold and it continues to multiply with every year. Its author lived long enough to see this change and to be comforted by it, for though the creative enthusiasm in his other books soon passed, his glory in the tale of Joan never died. On his seventy-third birthday, when all of his important books were far behind him, and he could judge them without prejudice, he wrote as his final verdict:

Nov. 30, 1908.

I like the *Joan of Arc* best of all my books; & it *is* the best; I know it perfectly well. And besides, it furnished me seven times the pleasure afforded me by any of the others: 12 years of preparation & 2 years of writing. The others needed no preparation, & got none. MARK TWAIN.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Mark Twain

CXCVI

MR. ROGERS AND HELEN KELLER

IT was during the winter of '96, in London, that Clemens took an active interest in the education of Helen Keller and enlisted the most valuable adherent in that cause, that is to say, Henry H. Rogers. It was to Mrs. Rogers that he wrote, heading his letter:

For & in behalf
of Helen Keller,
Stone blind & deaf, &
formerly dumb.

DEAR MRS. ROGERS,—Experience has convinced me that when one wished to set a hard-worked man at something which he mightn't prefer to be bothered with it is best to move upon him behind his wife. If she can't convince him it isn't worth while for other people to try.

Mr. Rogers will remember our visit with that astonishing girl at Laurence Hutton's house when she was fourteen years old. Last July, in Boston, when she was 16 she underwent the Harvard examination for admission to Radcliffe College. She passed without a single condition. She was allowed only the same amount of time that is granted to other applicants, & this was shortened in her case by the fact that the question-papers had to be *read* to her. Yet she scored an average of 90, as against an average of 78 on the part of the other applicants.

It won't *do* for America to allow this marvelous child to retire from her studies because of poverty. If she can go on with them she will make a fame that will endure in history for centuries. Along her special lines she is the most extraordinary product of all the ages.

There is danger that she must retire from the struggle for a

college degree for lack of support for herself & for Miss Sullivan (the teacher who has been with her from the start—Mr. Rogers will remember her). Mrs. Hutton writes to ask me to interest rich Englishmen in her case, & I would gladly try, but my secluded life will not permit it. I see *nobody*. Nobody knows my address. Nothing but the strictest hiding can enable me to write my book in time.

So I thought of this scheme: Beg you to lay siege to your husband & get him to interest himself and Messrs. John D. & William Rockefeller & the other Standard Oil chiefs in Helen's case; get them to subscribe an annual aggregate of six or seven hundred or a thousand dollars—& agree to continue this for three or four years, until she has completed her college course. I'm not trying to *limit* their generosity—indeed no; they may pile that Standard Oil Helen Keller College Fund as high as they please; they have *my* consent.

Mrs. Hutton's idea is to raise a permanent fund, the interest upon which shall support Helen & her teacher & put them out of the fear of want. I sha'n't say a word against it, but she will find it a difficult & disheartening job, & meanwhile what is to become of that miraculous girl?

No, for immediate and sound effectiveness, the thing is for you to plead with Mr. Rogers for this hampered wonder of your sex, & send him clothed with plenary powers to plead with the other chiefs—they have spent mountains of money upon the worthiest benevolences, & I think that the same spirit which moved them to put their hands down through their hearts into their pockets in those cases will answer "Here!" when its name is called in this one.

There—I don't need to apologize to you or to H. H. for this appeal that I am making; I know you too well for that.

Good-by, with love to all of you, S. L. Clemens.

The result of this letter was that Mr. Rogers personally took charge of Helen Keller's fortunes, and out of his own means made it possible for her to continue her education and to achieve for herself the enduring fame which Mark Twain had foreseen.

Mr. Rogers wrote that, by a curious coincidence, a letter

had come to him from Mrs. Hutton on the same morning that Mrs. Rogers had received hers from Tedworth Square. Clemens sent grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Rogers.

DEAR MRS. ROGERS,—It is superb! And I am beyond measure grateful to you both. I knew you would be interested in that wonderful girl, & that Mr. Rogers was already interested in her & touched by her; & I was sure that if nobody else helped her you two *would;* but you have gone far & away beyond the sum I expected—may your lines fall in pleasant places here & Hereafter for it!

The Huttons are as glad & grateful as they can be, & I am glad for their sakes as well as for Helen's.

I want to thank Mr. Rogers for crucifying himself on the same old cross between Bliss & Harper; & goodness knows I hope he will come to enjoy it above all other dissipations yet, seeing that it has about it the elements of stability & permanency. However, at any time that he says ***sign*** we're going to do it.

Ever sincerely yours,

S. L. CLEMENS.

CXCVII

FINISHING THE BOOK OF TRAVEL

ONE reading the *Equator* book to-day, and knowing the circumstances under which it was written, might be puzzled to reconcile the secluded household and its atmosphere of sorrow with certain gaieties of the subject-matter. The author himself wondered at it, and to Howells wrote:

I don't mean that I am miserable; no—worse than that—indifferent. Indifferent to nearly everything but work. I like that; I enjoy it, & stick to it. I do it without purpose & without ambition; merely for the love of it. Indeed, I am a mud-image; & it puzzles me to know what it is in me that writes & has comedy fancies & finds pleasure in phrasing them. It is the law of our nature, of course, or it wouldn't happen; the thing in me forgets the presence of the mud-image, goes its own way wholly unconscious of it & apparently of no kinship with it.

He saw little company. Now and then a good friend, J. Y. W. MacAlister, came in for a smoke with him. Once Clemens sent this line:

You speak a language which I understand. I would like to see you. Could you come and smoke some manilas; I would, of course, say dine, but my family are hermits & cannot see any one, but I would have a fire in my study, & if you came at any time after your dinner that might be most convenient for you you would find me & a welcome.

Clemens occasionally went out to dinner, but very privately. He dined with Bram Stoker, who invited Anthony Hope and one or two others, and with the

Chattos and Mr. Percy Spalding; also with Andrew Lang, who wrote, "Your old friend, Lord Lorne, wants to see you again"; with the Henry M. Stanleys and Poultney Bigelow, and with Francis H. Skrine, a government official he had met in India. But in all such affairs he was protected from strangers and his address was kept a secret from the public. Finally, the new-found cousin, Dr. Jim Clemens, fell ill, and the newspapers had it presently that Mark Twain was lying at the point of death. A reporter ferreted him out and appeared at Tedworth Square with cabled instructions from his paper. He was a young man, and innocently enough exhibited his credentials. His orders read:

"If Mark Twain very ill, five hundred words. If dead, send one thousand."

Clemens smiled grimly as he handed back the cable.

"You don't need as much as that," he said. "Just say the report of my death has been grossly exaggerated."

The young man went away quite seriously, and it was not until he was nearly to his office that he saw the joke. Then, of course, it was flashed all over the world.

Clemens kept grinding steadily at the book, for it was to be a very large volume—larger than he had ever written before. To MacAlister, April 6, 1897, he wrote, replying to some invitation:

> Ah, but I mustn't stir from my desk before night now when the publisher is hurrying me & I am almost through. I am up at work now—4 o'clock in the morning—and a few more spurts will pull me through. You come down here & smoke; that is better than tempting a working-man to strike & go to tea.
>
> And it would move me too deeply to see Miss Corelli. When I saw her last it was on the street in Homburg, & Susy was walking with me.

On April 13th he makes a note-book entry: "I finished my book to-day," and on the 15th he wrote MacAlister, inclosing some bits of manuscript:

I finished my book yesterday, and the madam edited this stuff out of it—on the ground that the first part is not delicate & the last part is *in*delicate. Now, there's a nice distinction for you—& correctly stated, too, & perfectly true.

It may interest the reader to consider briefly the manner in which Mark Twain's "editor" dealt with his manuscript, and a few pages of this particular book remain as examples. That he was not always entirely tractable, or at least submissive, but that he did yield, and graciously, is clearly shown.

In one of her comments Mrs. Clemens wrote:

Page 597. I hate to say it, but it seems to me that you go too minutely into particulars in describing the feats of the aboriginals. I felt it in the boomerang-throwing.

And Clemens just below has written:

Boomerang has been furnished with a special train—that is, I've turned it into "Appendix." Will that answer?

Page 1002. I don't like the "shady-principled cat that has a family in every port."

Then I'll modify him just a little.

Page 1020. 9th line from the top. I think some other word would be better than "stench." You have used that pretty often.

But can't I get it in *any*where? You've knocked it out every time. Out it goes again. And yet "stench" is a noble, good word.

Page 1038. I hate to have your father pictured as lashing a slave boy.

It's out, and my father is whitewashed.

Page 1050. 2d line from the bottom. Change breech-clout. It's a word that you love and I abominate. I would take that and "offal" out of the language.

You are steadily weakening the English tongue, Livy.

Page 1095. Perhaps you don't care, but whoever told you that the Prince's green stones were rubies told an untruth. They

were superb emeralds. Those strings of pearls and emeralds were famous all over Bombay.

All right, I'll make them emeralds, but it loses force. Green rubies is a fresh thing. And besides it was one of the Prince's own staff liars that told me.

That the book was not quite done, even after the triumphant entry of April 13th, is shown by another note which followed something more than a month later:

May 18, 1897. Finished the book again—addition of 30,000 words.

And to MacAlister he wrote:

I have finished the book at last—and finished it for good this time. Now I am ready for dissipation with a good conscience. What night will you come down & smoke?

His book finished, Clemens went out rather more freely, and one evening allowed MacAlister to take him around to the Savage Club. There happened to be a majority of the club committee present, and on motion Mark Twain was elected an honorary life member. There were but three others on whom this distinction had been conferred —Stanley, Nansen, and the Prince of Wales. When they told Mark Twain this he said:

"Well, it must make the Prince feel mighty fine."[1]

He did not intend to rest; in another entry we find:

May 23, 1897. Wrote first chapter of above story to-day.

The "above story" is a synopsis of a tale which he tried then and later in various forms—a tale based on a scientific idea that one may dream an episode covering a period of years in minute detail in what, by our reckon-

[1] In a volume of Savage Club anecdotes the date of Mark Twain's election to honorary membership is given as 1899. Clemens's notebook gives it in 1897.

ing, may be no more than a few brief seconds. In this particular form of the story a man sits down to write some memories and falls into a doze. The smell of his cigarette smoke causes him to dream of the burning of his home, the destruction of his family, and of a long period of years following. Awakening a few seconds later, and confronted by his wife and children, he refuses to believe in their reality, maintaining that this condition, and not the other, is the dream. Clemens tried the psychological literary experiment in as many as three different ways during the next two or three years, and each at considerable length; but he developed none of them to his satisfaction, or at least he brought none of them to conclusion. Perhaps the most weird of these attempts, and the most intensely interesting, so long as the verisimilitude is maintained, is a dream adventure in a drop of water which, through an incredible human reduction to microbic, even atomic, proportions, has become a vast tempestuous sea. Mark Twain had the imagination for these undertakings and the literary workmanship, lacking only a definite plan for development of his tale—a lack which had brought so many of his literary ventures to the rocks.

CXCVIII

A SUMMER IN SWITZERLAND

THE Queen's Jubilee came along—June 22, 1897, being the day chosen to celebrate the sixty-year reign. Clemens had been asked to write about it for the American papers, and he did so after his own ideas, illustrating some of his material with pictures of his own selection. The selections were made from various fashion-plates, which gave him a chance to pick the kind of a prince or princess or other royal figure that he thought fitted his description without any handicap upon his imagination. Under his portrait of Henry V. (a very correctly dressed person in top-hat and overcoat) he wrote:

> In the original the King has a crown on. That is no kind of a thing for the King to wear when he has come home on business. He ought to wear something he can collect taxes in. You will find this representation of Henry V. active, full of feeling, full of sublimity. I have pictured him looking out over the battle of Agincourt and studying up where to begin.

Mark Twain's account of the Jubilee probably satisfied most readers; but James Tufts, then managing editor of the San Francisco *Examiner*, had a rather matter-of-fact Englishman on the staff, who, after reading the report, said:

"Well, Jim Tufts, I hope you are satisfied with that Mark Twain cable."

"Why, yes," said Tufts; "aren't you?"

"I should say not. Just look what he says about the

number of soldiers. He says, 'I never saw so many soldiers anywhere except on the stage of a theater.' Why, Tufts, don't you know that the soldiers in the theater are the same old soldiers marching around and around? There aren't more than a hundred soldiers in the biggest army ever put on the stage."

It was decided to vacate the house in Tedworth Square and go to Switzerland for the summer. Mrs. Crane and Charles Langdon's daughter, Julia, joined them early in July, and they set out for Switzerland a few days later. Just before leaving, Clemens received an offer from Pond of fifty thousand dollars for one hundred and twenty-five nights on the platform in America. It was too great a temptation to resist at once, and they took it under advisement. Clemens was willing to accept, but Mrs. Clemens opposed the plan. She thought his health no longer equal to steady travel. She believed that with continued economy they would be able to manage their problem without this sum. In the end the offer was declined.

They journeyed to Switzerland by way of Holland and Germany, the general destination being Lucerne. They did not remain there, however. They found a pretty little village farther up the lake—Weggis, at the foot of the Rigi—where, in the Villa Bühlegg, they arranged for the summer at very moderate rates indeed. Weggis is a beautiful spot, looking across the blue water to Mount Pilatus, the lake shore dotted with white villages. Down by the water, but a few yards from the cottage—for it was scarcely a villa except by courtesy—there was a little inclosure, and a bench under a large tree, a quiet spot where Clemens often sat to rest and smoke. The fact is remembered there to-day, and recorded. A small tablet has engraved upon it "Mark Twain Ruhe." Farther along the shore he discovered a neat, white cottage where some kindly working-people agreed to rent him an upper room for a study. It was a sunny room with

windows looking out upon the lake, and he worked there steadily. To Twichell he wrote:

> This is the charmingest place we have ever lived in for repose and restfulness, superb scenery whose beauty undergoes a perpetual change from one miracle to another, yet never runs short of fresh surprises and new inventions. We shall always come here for the summers if we can.

The others have climbed the Rigi, he says, and he expects to some day if Twichell will come and climb it with him. They had climbed it together during that summer vagabondage, nineteen years before.

He was full of enthusiasm over his work. To F. H. Skrine, in London, he wrote that he had four or five books all going at once, and his note-book contains two or three pages merely of titles of the stories he proposed to write.

But of the books begun that summer at Weggis none appears to have been completed. There still exists a bulky, half-finished manuscript about Tom and Huck, most of which was doubtless written at this time, and there is the tale already mentioned, the "dream" story; and another tale with a plot of intricate psychology and crime; still another with the burning title of "Hell-Fire Hotchkiss"—a story of Hannibal life—and some short stories. Clemens appeared to be at this time out of tune with fiction. Perhaps his long book of travel had disqualified his invention. He realized that these various literary projects were leading nowhere, and one after another he dropped them. The fact that proofs of the big book were coming steadily may also have interfered with his creative faculty.

As was his habit, Clemens formed the acquaintance of a number of the native residents, and enjoyed talking to them about their business and daily affairs. They were usually proud and glad of these attentions, quick to see the humor of his remarks.

But there was an old watchmaker—an *Uhrmacher*—who remained indifferent. He would answer only in somber monosyllables, and he never smiled. Clemens at last brought the cheapest kind of a watch for repairs.

"Be very careful of this watch," he said. "It is a fine one."

The old man merely glared at him.

"It is not a valuable watch. It is a worthless watch."

"But I gave six francs for it in Paris."

"Still, it is a cheap watch," was the unsmiling answer. Defeat waits somewhere for every conqueror.

Which recalls another instance, though of a different sort. On one of his many voyages to America he was sitting on deck in a steamer-chair when two little girls stopped before him. One of them said, hesitatingly:

"Are you Mr. Mark Twain?"

"Why, yes, dear, they call me that."

"Won't you please say something funny?"

And for the life of him he couldn't make the required remark.

In one of his letters to Twichell of that summer, Clemens wrote of the arrival there of the colored jubilee singers, always favorites of his, and of his great delight in them.

> We went down to the village hotel & bought our tickets & entered the beer-hall, where a crowd of German & Swiss men & women sat grouped around tables with their beer-mugs in front of them—self-contained & unimpressionable-looking people—an indifferent & unposted & disheartening audience—& up at the far end of the room sat the jubilees in a row. The singers got up & stood—the talking & glass-jingling went on. Then rose & swelled out above those common earthly sounds one of those rich chords, the secret of whose make only the jubilees possess, & a spell fell upon that house. It was fine to see the faces light up with the pleased wonder & surprise of it. No one was indifferent any more; & when the singers finished the camp was theirs. It was a triumph. It reminded me of Lancelot riding

in Sir Kay's armor, astonishing complacent knights who thought they had struck a soft thing. The jubilees sang a lot of pieces. Arduous & painstaking cultivation has not diminished or artificialized their music, but on the contrary—to my surprise—has mightily reinforced its eloquence and beauty. Away back in the beginning—to my mind—their music made all other vocal music cheap; & that early notion is emphasized now. It is entirely beautiful to me; & it moves me infinitely more than any other music can. I think that in the jubilees & their songs America has produced the perfectest flower of the ages; & I wish it were a foreign product, so that she would worship it & lavish money on it & go properly crazy over it.

Now, these countries are different: *they* would do all that if it were *native*. It is true they praise God, but that is merely a formality, & nothing in it; they open out their whole hearts to *no* foreigner.

As the first anniversary of Susy's death drew near the tension became very great. A gloom settled on the household, a shadow of restraint. On the morning of the 18th Clemens went early to his study. Somewhat later Mrs. Clemens put on her hat and wrap, and taking a small bag left the house. The others saw her go toward the steamer-landing, but made no inquiries as to her destination. They guessed that she would take the little boat that touched at the various points along the lake shore. This she did, in fact, with no particular plan as to where she would leave it. One of the landing-places seemed quiet and inviting, and there she went ashore, and taking a quiet room at a small inn spent the day in reading Susy's letters. It was evening when she returned, and her husband, lonely and anxious, was waiting for her at the landing. He had put in the day writing the beautiful poem, "In Memoriam," a strain lofty, tender, and dirge-like—liquidly musical, though irregular in form.[1]

[1] Now included in the Uniform Edition.

CXCIX

WINTER IN VIENNA

THEY remained two months in Weggis—until toward the end of September; thence to Vienna, by way of Innsbruck, in the Tyrol, "where the mountains seem more approachable than in Switzerland." Clara Clemens wished to study the piano under Leschetizky, and this would take them to Austria for the winter. Arriving at Vienna, they settled in the Hotel Metropole, on the banks of the Danube. Their rooms, a corner suite, looked out on a pretty green square, the Merzimplatz, and down on the Franz Josef quay. A little bridge crosses the river there, over which all kinds of life are continually passing. On pleasant days Clemens liked to stand on this bridge and watch the interesting phases of the Austrian capital. The Vienna humorist, Poetzl, quickly formed his acquaintance, and they sometimes stood there together. Once while Clemens was making some notes, Poetzl interested the various passers by asking each one—the errand-boy, the boot-black, the chestnut-vender, cabmen, and others—to guess who the stranger was and what he wanted. Most of them recognized him when their attention was called, for the newspapers had proudly heralded his arrival and his picture was widely circulated.

Clemens had scarcely arrived in Vienna, in fact, before he was pursued by photographers, journalists, and autograph-hunters. The Viennese were his fond admirers, and knowing how the world elsewhere had honored him they were determined not to be outdone. The *Neues Wiener Tageblatt*, a fortnight after his arrival, said:

WINTER IN VIENNA

It is seldom that a foreign author has found such a hearty reception in Vienna as that accorded to Mark Twain, who not only has the reputation of being the foremost humorist in the whole civilized world, but one whose personality arouses everywhere a peculiar interest on account of the genuine American character which sways it.

He was the guest of honor at the Concordia Club soon after his arrival, and the great ones of Vienna assembled to do him honor. Charlemagne Tower, then American minister, was also one of the guests. Writers, diplomats, financiers, municipal officials, everybody in Vienna that was worth while, was there. Clemens gave them a surprise, for when Ferdinand Gross, Concordia president, introduced him first in English, then in German, Mark Twain made his reply wholly in the latter language.

The paper just quoted gives us a hint of the frolic and wassail of that old *Festkneipe* when it says:

At 9 o'clock Mark Twain appeared in the salon, and amid a storm of applause took his seat at the head of the table. His characteristic shaggy and flowing mane of hair adorning a youthful countenance attracted the attention at once of all present. After a few formal convivial commonplaces the president of the Concordia, Mr. Ferdinand Gross, delivered an excellent address in English, which he wound up with a few German sentences. Then Mr. Tower was heard in praise of his august countryman. In the course of his remarks he said he could hardly find words enough to express his delight at the presence of the popular American. Then followed the greatest attraction of the evening, an impromptu speech by Mark Twain in the German language, which it is true he has not fully mastered, but which he nevertheless controls sufficiently well to make it difficult to detect any harsh foreign accent. He had entitled his speech, "Die Schrecken der Deutschen Sprache" (the terrors of the German language). At times he would interrupt himself in English and ask, with a stuttering smile, "How do you call this word in German" or "I only know that in mother-tongue." The *Festkneipe* lasted far into the morning hours.

It was not long after their arrival in Vienna that the friction among the unamalgamated Austrian states flamed into a general outbreak in the Austrian Reichsrath, or Imperial Parliament. We need not consider just what the trouble was. Any one wishing to know can learn from Mark Twain's article on the subject, for it is more clearly pictured there than elsewhere. It is enough to say here that the difficulty lay mainly between the Hungarian and German wings of the house; and in the midst of it Dr. Otto Lecher made his famous speech, which lasted twelve hours without a break, in order to hold the floor against the opposing forces. Clemens was in the gallery most of the time while that speech, with its riotous accompaniment, was in progress.[1] He was intensely interested. Nothing would appeal to him more than that, unless it should be some great astronomic or geologic change. He was also present somewhat later when a resolution was railroaded through which gave the chair the right to invoke the aid of the military, and he was there when the military arrived and took the insurgents in charge. It was a very great occasion, a "tremendous episode," he says.

> The memory of it will outlast all the others that exist to-day. In the whole history of free parliament the like of it had been seen but three times before. It takes imposing place among the world's unforgetable things. I think that in my lifetime I have not twice seen abiding history made before my eyes, but I know that I have seen it once.

Wild reports were sent to the American press; among them one that Mark Twain had been hustled out with the others, and that, having waved his handkerchief and shouted "Hoch die Deutschen!" he had been struck by

[1] "When that house is legislating you can't tell it from artillery practice." From Mark Twain's report, "Stirring Times in Austria," in *Literary Essays*.

an officer of the law. Of course nothing of the kind happened. The sergeant-at-arms, who came to the gallery where he sat, said to a friend who suggested that Clemens be allowed to remain:

"Oh, I know him very well. I recognize him by his pictures, and I should be very glad to let him stay, but I haven't any choice because of the strictness of the order."

Clemens, however, immediately ran across a London *Times* correspondent, who showed him the way into the first gallery, which it seems was not emptied, so he lost none of the exhibit.

Mark Twain's report of the Austrian troubles, published in *Harper's Magazine* the following March and now included with the *Literary Essays*, will keep that episode alive and important as literature when otherwise it would have been merely embalmed, and dimly remembered, as history.

It was during these exciting political times in Vienna that a representative of a New York paper wrote, asking for a Mark Twain interview. Clemens replied, giving him permission to call. When the reporter arrived Clemens was at work writing in bed, as was so much his habit. At the doorway the reporter paused, waiting for a summons to enter. The door was ajar and he heard Mrs. Clemens say:

"Youth, don't you think it will be a little embarrassing for him, your being in bed?"

And he heard Mark Twain's easy, gentle, deliberate voice reply:

"Why, Livy, if you think so, we might have the other bed made up for him."

Clemens became a privileged character in Vienna. Official rules were modified for his benefit. Everything was made easy for him. Once, on a certain grand occasion, when nobody was permitted to pass beyond a pre-

scribed line, and he was stopped by a guard, the officer in charge suddenly rode up:

"Let him pass," he commanded. "Lieber Gott! Don't you see it's Herr Mark Twain?"

The Clemens apartments at the Metropole were like a court, where with those of social rank assembled the foremost authors, journalists, diplomats, painters, philosophers, scientists, of Europe, and therefore of the world. A sister of the Emperor of Germany lived at the Metropole that winter and was especially cordial. Mark Twain's daily movements were chronicled as if he had been some visiting potentate, and, as usual, invitations and various special permissions poured in. A Vienna paper announced:

> He has been fêted and dined from morn till eve. The homes of the aristocracy are thrown open to him, counts and princes delight to do him honor, and foreign audiences hang upon the words that fall from his lips, ready to burst out any instant into roars of laughter.

* * * * * *

Deaths never came singly in the Clemens family. It was on the 11th of December, 1897, something more than a year after the death of Susy, that Orion Clemens died, at the age of seventy-two. Orion had remained the same to the end, sensitively concerned as to all his brother's doings, his fortunes and misfortunes: soaring into the clouds when any good news came; indignant, eager to lend help and advice in the hour of defeat; loyal, upright, and generally beloved by those who knew and understood his gentle nature. He had not been ill, and, in fact, only a few days before he died had written a fine congratulatory letter on his brother's success in accumulating means for the payment of his debts, entering enthusiastically into some literary plans which Mark Twain then had in prospect, offering himself for caricature if needed.

I would fit in as a fool character, believing, what the Tennessee mountaineers predicted, that I would grow up to be a great man and go to Congress. I did not think it worth the trouble to be a common great man like Andy Johnson. I wouldn't give a pinch of snuff, little as I needed it, to be anybody less than Napoleon. So when a farmer took my father's offer for some chickens under advisement till the next day I said to myself, "Would Napoleon Bonaparte have taken under advisement till the next day an offer to sell him some chickens?"

To his last day and hour Orion was the dreamer, always with a new plan. It was one morning early that he died. He had seated himself at a table with pencil and paper and was setting down the details of his latest project when death came to him, kindly enough, in the moment of new hope.

News of another death reached Vienna about this time—that of their old Hartford butler, George. It saddened them as if it had been a member of the household. Jean, especially, wept bitterly.

CC

MARK TWAIN PAYS HIS DEBTS

FOLLOWING THE EQUATOR[1] had come from the press in November and had been well received. It was a large, elaborate subscription volume, more elaborate than artistic in appearance. Clemens, wishing to make some acknowledgment to his benefactor, tactfully dedicated it to young Harry Rogers:

"With recognition of what he is, and an apprehension of what he may become unless he form himself a little more closely upon the model of the author."

Following the Equator was Mark Twain's last book of travel, and it did not greatly resemble its predecessors. It was graver than the *Innocents Abroad;* it was less inclined to cynicism and burlesque than the *Tramp.* It was the thoughtful, contemplative observation and philosophizing of the soul-weary, world-weary pilgrim who has by no means lost interest, but only his eager, first enthusiasm. It is a gentler book than the *Tramp Abroad,* and for the most part a pleasanter one. It is better history and more informing. Its humor, too, is of a worthier sort, less likely to be forced and overdone. The holy Hindoo pilgrim's "itinerary of salvation" is one of the richest of all Mark Twain's fancies, and is about the best thing in the book. The revised philosophies of Pudd'nhead Wilson, that begin each chapter, have many of them passed into our daily speech. That some of Mark Twain's

[1] In England, *More Tramps Abroad.*

admirers were disappointed with the new book is very likely, but there were others who could not praise it enough. James Whitcomb Riley wrote:

DEAR MR. CLEMENS,—For a solid week—night sessions—I have been glorying in your last book—and if you've ever done anything better, stronger, or of wholesomer uplift I can't recall it. So here's my heart and here's my hand with all the augmented faith and applause of your proudest countryman! It's just a hail I'm sending you across the spaces—not to call you from your blessed work an instant, but simply to join my voice in the universal cheer that is steadfastly going up for you.

As gratefully as delightedly,

Your abiding friend,

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.

Notwithstanding the belief that the sale of single subscription volumes had about ended, Bliss did well with the new book. Thirty or forty thousand copies were placed without much delay, and the accumulated royalties paid into Mr. Rogers's hands. The burden of debt had become a nightmare. Clemens wrote:

Let us begin on those debts. I cannot bear the weight any longer. It totally unfits me for work.

This was November 10, 1897. December 29th he wrote:

Land, we are glad to see those debts diminishing. For the first time in my life I am getting more pleasure from paying money out than pulling it in.

To Howells, January 3d, Clemens wrote that they had "turned the corner," and a month later:

We've lived close to the bone and saved every cent we could, & there's no undisputed claim now that we can't cash. There are only two claims which I dispute & which I mean to look into personally before I pay them. But they are small. Both together they amount to only $12,500. I hope you will never get the like of the load saddled onto you that was saddled onto me

3 years ago. And yet there is such a solid pleasure in *paying* the things that I reckon maybe it is worth while to get into that kind of a hobble after all. Mrs. Clemens gets millions of delight out of it; & the children have never uttered one complaint about the scrimping from the beginning.

By the end of January, 1898, Mark Twain had accumulated enough money to make the final payment to his creditors and stand clear of debt. At the time of his failure he said he had given himself five years in which to clear himself of the heavy obligation. He had achieved that result in less than four. The world heralded it as a splendid triumph.

Miss Katharine I. Harrison, Henry Rogers's secretary, who had been in charge of the details, wrote in her letter announcing his freedom:

"I wish I could shout it across the water to you so that you would get it ten days ahead of this letter."

Miss Harrison's letter shows that something like thirteen thousand dollars would remain to his credit after the last accounts were wiped away.

Clemens had kept his financial progress from the press, but the payment of the final claims was distinctly a matter of news and the papers made the most of it. Head-lines shouted it, there were long editorials in which Mark Twain was heralded as a second Walter Scott, though it was hardly necessary that he should be compared with anybody; he had been in that—as in those peculiarities which had invited his disaster—just himself.

One might suppose now that he had had enough of inventions and commercial enterprises of every sort—that is, one who did not know Mark Twain might suppose this; but it would not be true. Within a month after the debts were paid he had negotiated with the great Austrian inventor, Szczepanik, and his business manager for the American rights of a wonderful carpet-pattern machine,

obtained an option for these rights at fifteen hundred thousand dollars, and, Sellers-like, was planning to organize a company with a capital of fifteen hundred million dollars to control carpet-weaving industries of the world. He records in his note-book that a certain Mr. Wood, representing the American carpet interests, called upon him and, in the course of their conversation, asked him at what price he would sell his option.

I declined, and got away from the subject. I was afraid he would offer me $500,000 for it. I should have been obliged to take it, but I was born with a speculative instinct & I did not want that temptation put in my way.

He wrote to Mr. Rogers about the great scheme, inviting the Standard Oil to furnish the capital for it—but it appears not to have borne the test of Mr. Rogers's scrutiny, and is heard of no more.

Szczepanik had invented the *Fernseher*, or Telelectroscope, the machine by which one sees at a distance. Clemens would have invested heavily in this, too, for he had implicit faith in its future, but the *Fernseher* was already controlled for the Paris Exposition; so he could only employ Szczepanik as literary material, which he did in two instances: "The Austrian Edison Keeping School Again" and "From the London *Times* of 1904"—magazine articles published in the *Century* later in the year. He was fond of Szczepanik and Szczepanik's backer, Mr. Kleinburg. In one of his note-book entries he says:

Szczepanik is not a Paige. He is a gentleman; his backer, Mr. Kleinburg, is a gentleman, too, yet is not a Clemens—that is to say, he is not an ass.

Clemens did not always consult his financial adviser, Rogers, any more than he always consulted his spiritual adviser, Twichell, or his literary adviser, Howells, when he intended to commit heresies in their respective prov-

inces. Somewhat later an opportunity came along to buy an interest in a preparation of skimmed milk, an invalid food by which the human race was going to be healed of most of its ills. When Clemens heard that Virchow had recommended this new restorative, the name of which was plasmon, he promptly provided MacAlister with five thousand pounds to invest in a company then organizing in London. It should be added that this particular investment was not an entire loss, for it paid very good dividends for several years. We shall hear of it again.

For the most part Clemens was content to let Henry Rogers do his financiering, and as the market was low with an upward incline, Rogers put the various accumulations into this thing and that, and presently had some fifty thousand dollars to Mark Twain's credit, a very comfortable balance for a man who had been twice that amount in debt only a few years before. It has been asserted most strenuously, by those in a position to know least about the matter, that Henry Rogers lent, and even gave, Mark Twain large sums, and pointed out opportunities whereby he could make heavily by speculation. No one of these statements is true. Mr. Rogers neither lent nor gave Mark Twain money for investment, and he never allowed him to speculate when he could prevent it. He invested for him wisely, but he never bought for him a share of stock that he did not have the money in hand to pay for in full—money belonging to and earned by Clemens himself. What he did give to Mark Twain was his priceless counsel and time—gifts more precious than any mere sum of money—boons that Mark Twain could accept without humiliation. He did accept them and was unceasingly grateful.[1]

[1] Mark Twain never lost an opportunity for showing his gratitude to Henry Rogers. The reader is referred to Appendix T, at the end of the last volume, for a brief tribute which Clemens prepared in 1902. Mr. Rogers would not consent to its publication.

CCI

SOCIAL LIFE IN VIENNA

CLEMENS, no longer worried about finances and full of ideas and prospects, was writing now at a great rate, mingling with all sorts of social events, lecturing for charities, and always in the lime-light.

I have abundant peace of mind again—no sense of burden. Work is become a pleasure—it is not labor any longer.

He was the lion of the Austrian capital, and it was natural that he should revel in his new freedom and in the universal tribute. Mrs. Clemens wrote that they were besieged with callers of every description:

Such funny combinations are here sometimes: one duke, several counts, several writers, several barons, two princes, newspaper women, etc. I find so far, without exception, that the high-up aristocracy are simple and cordial and agreeable.

When Clemens appeared as a public entertainer all society turned out to hear him and introductions were sought by persons of the most exclusive rank. Once a royal introduction led to an adventure. He had been giving a charity reading in Vienna, and at the end of it was introduced, with Mrs. Clemens, to her Highness, Countess Bardi, a princess of the Portuguese royal house by marriage and sister to the Austrian Archduchess Maria Theresa. They realized that something was required after such an introduction; that, in fact, they must go within a day or two and pay their respects by writing

their names in the visitors' book, kept in a sort of anteroom of the royal establishment. A few days later, about noon, they drove to the archducal palace, inquired their way to the royal anteroom, and informed the grandly uniformed *portier* that they wished to write their names in the visitors' book. The *portier* did not produce the book, but summoned a man in livery and gold lace and directed him to take them up-stairs, remarking that her Royal Highness was out, but would be in presently. They protested that her Royal Highness was not looking for them, that they were not calling, but had merely come to sign the visitors' book, but he said:

"You are Americans, are you not?"

"Yes, we are Americans."

"Then you are expected. Please go up-stairs."

Mrs. Clemens said:

"Oh no, we are not expected; there is some mistake. Please let us sign the book and we will go away."

But it was no use. He insisted that her Royal Highness would be back in a very little while; that she had commanded him to say so and that they must wait. They were shown up-stairs, Clemens going willingly enough, for he scented an adventure; but Mrs. Clemens was far from happy. They were taken to a splendid drawing-room, and at the doorway she made her last stand, refusing to enter. She declared that there was certainly some mistake, and begged them to let her sign her name in the book and go, without parleying. It was no use. Their conductor insisted that they remove their wraps and sit down, which they finally did—Mrs. Clemens miserable, her husband in a delightful state of anticipation. Writing of it to Twichell that night he said:

I was hoping and praying that the Princess would come and catch us up there, & that those other Americans who were expected would arrive and be taken as impostors by the *portier* & be shot by the sentinels & then it would all go into the papers

& be cabled all over the world & make an immense stir and be perfectly lovely.

Livy was in a state of mind; she said it was too theatrically ridiculous & that I would never be able to keep my mouth shut; that I would be sure to let it out & it would get into the papers, & she tried to make me promise.

"Promise what?" I said.

"To be quiet about this."

"Indeed I won't; it's the best thing ever happened. I'll tell it and add to it & I wish Joe & Howells were here to make it perfect; I can't make all the rightful blunders by myself—it takes all three of us to do justice to an opportunity like this. I would just like to see Howells get down to his work & explain & lie & work his futile & inventionless subterfuges when that Princess comes raging in here & wanting to *know*."

But Livy could not hear fun—it was not a time to be trying to be funny. We were in a most miserable & shameful situation, & it—

Just then the door spread wide & our Princess & 4 more & 3 little Princes flowed in! Our Princess & her sister, the Archduchess Maria Theresa (mother to the imperial heir & to the 2 young girl Archduchesses present, & aunt to the 3 little Princes), & we shook hands all around & sat down & had a most sociable time for half an hour, & by & by it turned out that we were the right ones & had been sent for by a messenger who started too late to catch us at the hotel. We were invited for 2 o'clock, but we beat that arrangement by an hour & a half.

Wasn't it a rattling good comedy situation? Seems a kind of pity we were the right ones. It would have been such nuts to see the right ones come and get fired out, & we chatting along comfortably & nobody suspecting us for impostors.

Mrs. Clemens to Mrs. Crane:

Of course I know that I should have courtesied to her Imperial Majesty & not quite so deep to her Royal Highness, and that Mr. Clemens should have kissed their hands; but it was all so unexpected that I had no time to prepare, and if I had had I should not have been there; I only went in to help Mr. C. with my bad German. When our minister's wife is going to be presented to the Archduchess she practises her courtesying beforehand.

They had met royalty in simple American fashion and no disaster had followed.

We have already made mention of the distinguished visitors who gathered in the Clemens apartments at the Hotel Metropole. They were of many nations and ranks. It was the winter in London of twenty-five years before over again. Only Mark Twain was not the same. Then he had been unsophisticated, new, not always at his ease; now he was the polished familiar of courts and embassies —at home equally with poets and princes, authors and ambassadors and kings. Such famous ones were there as Vereshchagin, Leschetizky, Mark Hambourg, Dvorák, Lenbach, and Jókai, with diplomats of many nations. A list of foreign names may mean little to the American reader, but among them were Neigra, of Italy; Paraty, of Portugal; Lowenhaupt, of Sweden; and Ghiki, of Rumania. The Queen of Rumania, Carmen Sylva, a poetess in her own right, was a friend and warm admirer of Mark Twain. The Princess Metternich, and Madame de Laschowska, of Poland, were among those who came, and there were Nansen and his wife, and Campbell-Bannerman, who was afterward British Premier. Also there was Spiridon, the painter, who made portraits of Clara Clemens and her father, and other artists and potentates —the list is too long.

Those were brilliant, notable gatherings and are remembered in Vienna to-day. They were not always entirely harmonious, for politics was in the air and differences of opinion were likely to be pretty freely expressed.

Clemens and his family, as Americans, did not always have a happy time of it. It was the eve of the Spanish-American War and most of continental Europe sided with Spain. Austria, in particular, was friendly to its related nation; and from every side the Clemenses heard how America was about to take a brutal and unfair advantage of a weaker nation for the sole purpose of annexing Cuba.

Charles Langdon and his son Jervis happened to arrive in Vienna about this time, bringing straight from America the comforting assurance that the war was not one of conquest or annexation, but a righteous defense of the weak. Mrs. Clemens gave a dinner for them, at which, besides some American students, were Mark Hambourg, Gabrilowitsch, and the great Leschetizky himself. Leschetizky, an impetuous and eloquent talker, took this occasion to inform the American visitors that their country was only shamming, that Cuba would soon be an American dependency. No one not born to the language could argue with Leschetizky. Clemens once wrote of him:

He is a most capable and felicitous talker—was born for an orator, I think. What life, energy, fire in a man past 70! & how he does play! He is easily the greatest pianist in the world. He is just as great & just as capable to-day as ever he was.

Last Sunday night, at dinner with us, he did all the talking for 3 hours, and everybody was glad to let him. He told his experiences as a revolutionist 50 years ago in '48, & his battle-pictures were magnificently worded. Poetzl had never met him before. He is a talker himself & a good one—but he merely sat silent & gazed across the table at this inspired man, & drank in his words, & let his eyes fill & the blood come & go in his face & never said a word.

Whatever may have been his doubts in the beginning concerning the Cuban War, Mark Twain, by the end of May, had made up his mind as to its justice. When Theodore Stanton invited him to the Decoration Day banquet to be held in Paris, he replied:

I thank you very much for your invitation and I would accept if I were foot-free. For I should value the privilege of helping you do honor to the men who rewelded our broken Union and consecrated their great work with their lives; and also I should like to be there to do homage to our soldiers and sailors of to-day who are enlisted for another most righteous war, and utter the hope that they may make short and decisive work of it and leave

Cuba free and fed when they face for home again. And finally I should like to be present and see you interweave those two flags which, more than any others, stand for freedom and progress in the earth—flags which represent two kindred nations, each great and strong by itself, competent sureties for the peace of the world when they stand together.

That is to say, the flags of England and America. To an Australian friend he emphasized this thought:

The war has brought England and America close together—and to my mind that is the biggest dividend that any war in this world has ever paid. If this feeling is ever to grow cold again I do not wish to live to see it.

And to Twichell, whose son David had enlisted:

You are living your war-days over again in Dave & it must be strong pleasure mixed with a sauce of apprehension. . . .

I have never enjoyed a war, even in history, as I am enjoying this one, for this is the worthiest one that was ever fought, so far as my knowledge goes. It is a worthy thing to fight for one's own country. It is another sight finer to fight for another man's. And I think this is the first time it has been done.

But it was a sad day for him when he found that the United States really meant to annex the Philippines, and his indignation flamed up. He said:

"When the United States sent word to Spain that the Cuban atrocities must end she occupied the highest moral position ever taken by a nation since the Almighty made the earth. But when she snatched the Philippines she stained the flag."

CCII

LITERARY WORK IN VIENNA

ONE must wonder, with all the social demands upon him, how Clemens could find time to write as much as he did during those Vienna days. He piled up a great heap of manuscript of every sort. He wrote Twichell:

There may be idle people in the world, but I am not one of them.

And to Howells:

I couldn't get along without work now. I bury myself in it up to the ears. Long hours—8 & 9 on a stretch sometimes. It isn't all for print, by any means, for much of it fails to suit me; 50,000 words of it in the past year. It was because of the deadness which invaded me when Susy died.

He projected articles, stories, critiques, essays, novels, autobiography, even plays; he covered the whole literary round. Among these activities are some that represent Mark Twain's choicest work. "Concerning the Jews," which followed the publication of his "Stirring Times in Austria" (grew out of it, in fact), still remains the best presentation of the Jewish character and racial situation. Mark Twain was always an ardent admirer of the Jewish race, and its oppression naturally invited his sympathy. Once he wrote to Twichell:

The difference between the brain of the average Christian and that of the average Jew—certainly in Europe—is about the difference between a tadpole's brain & an archbishop's. It is

a marvelous race; by long odds the most marvelous race the world has produced, I suppose.

Yet he did not fail to see its faults and to set them down in his summary of Hebrew character. It was a reply to a letter written to him by a lawyer, and he replied as a lawyer might, compactly, logically, categorically, conclusively. The result pleased him. To Mr. Rogers he wrote:

The Jew article is my "gem of the ocean." I have taken a world of pleasure in writing it & doctoring it & fussing at it. Neither Jew nor Christian will approve of it, but people who are neither Jews *nor* Christian will, for they are in a condition to know the truth when they see it.

Clemens was not given to race distinctions. In his article he says:

I am quite sure that (bar one) I have no race prejudices, and I think I have no color prejudices nor caste prejudices nor creed prejudices. Indeed I know it. I can stand any society. All that I care to know is that a man is a human being, that is enough for me; he can't be any worse.

We gather from something that follows that the one race which he bars is the French, and this, just then, mainly because of the Dreyfus agitations.

He also states in this article:

I have no special regard for Satan, but I can at least claim that I have no prejudice against him. It may even be that I lean a little his way on account of his not having a fair show.

Clemens indeed always had a friendly feeling toward Satan (at least, as he conceived him), and just at this time addressed a number of letters to him concerning affairs in general—cordial, sympathetic, informing letters, though apparently not suited for publication. A good deal of the work done at this period did not find its way into

print. An interview with Satan; a dream-story concerning a platonic sweetheart, and some further comment on Austrian politics, are among the condemned manuscripts.

Mark Twain's interest in Satan would seem later to have extended to his relatives, for there are at least three bulky manuscripts in which he has attempted to set down some episodes in the life of one "Young Satan," a nephew, who appears to have visited among the planets and promoted some astonishing adventures in Austria several centuries ago. The idea of a mysterious, young, and beautiful stranger who would visit the earth and perform mighty wonders, was always one which Mark Twain loved to play with, and a nephew of Satan's seemed to him properly qualified to carry out his intention. His idea was that this celestial visitant was not wicked, but only indifferent to good and evil and suffering, having no personal knowledge of any of these things. Clemens tried the experiment in various ways, and portions of the manuscript are absorbingly interesting, lofty in conception, and rarely worked out—other portions being merely grotesque, in which the illusion of reality vanishes.

Among the published work of the Vienna period is an article about a morality play, the "Master of Palmyra," [1] by Adolf Wilbrandt, an impressive play presenting Death, the all-powerful, as the principal part.

The *Cosmopolitan Magazine* for August published "At the Appetite-Cure," in which Mark Twain, in the guise of humor, set forth a very sound and sensible idea concerning dietetics, and in October the same magazine published his first article on "Christian Science and the Book of Mrs. Eddy." As we have seen, Clemens had been always deeply interested in mental healing, and in closing this humorous skit he made due acknowledgments to the

[1] About play-acting, *Forum*, October, 1898.

unseen forces which, properly employed, through the imagination work physical benefits:

"Within the last quarter of a century," he says, "in America several sects of curers have appeared under various names and have done notable things in the way of healing ailments without the use of medicines."

Clemens was willing to admit that Mrs. Eddy and her book had benefited humanity, but he could not resist the fun-making which certain of her formulas and her phrasing invited. The delightful humor of the *Cosmopolitan* article awoke a general laugh, in which even devout Christian Scientists were inclined to join.[1] Nothing that he ever did exhibits more happily that peculiar literary gift upon which his fame rests.

But there is another story of this period that will live when most of those others mentioned are but little remembered. It is the story of "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg." This is a tale that in its own way takes its place with the half-dozen great English short stories of the world—with such stories as "The Fall of the House of Usher," by Poe; "The Luck of Roaring Camp," by Harte; "The Man Who Would be King," by Kipling; and "The Man Without a Country," by Hale. As a study of the human soul, its flimsy pretensions and its pitiful frailties, it outranks all the rest. In it Mark Twain's pessimistic philosophy concerning the "human animal" found a free and moral vent. Whatever his contempt for a thing, he was always amused at it; and in this tale we can imagine him a gigantic Pantagruel dangling a ridiculous manikin, throwing himself back and roaring out his great bursting guffaws at its pitiful antics. The temptation and the downfall of a whole town was a colossal idea, a sardonic idea, and it is colossally and sardonically worked out.

[1] It was so popular that John Brisben Walker voluntarily added a check for two hundred dollars to the eight hundred dollars already paid.

Human weakness and rotten moral force were never stripped so bare or so mercilessly jeered at in the market-place. For once Mark Twain could hug himself with glee in derision of self-righteousness, knowing that the world would laugh with him, and that none would be so bold as to gainsay his mockery. Probably no one but Mark Twain ever conceived the idea of demoralizing a whole community—of making its "nineteen leading citizens" ridiculous by leading them into a cheap, glittering temptation, and having them yield and openly perjure themselves at the very moment when their boasted incorruptibility was to amaze the world. And it is all wonderfully done. The mechanism of the story is perfect, the drama of it is complete. The exposure of the nineteen citizens in the very sanctity of the church itself, and by the man they have discredited, completing the carefully prepared revenge of the injured stranger, is supreme in its artistic triumph. "The Man that Corrupted Hadleyburg" is one of the mightiest sermons against self-righteousness ever preached. Its philosophy, that every man is strong until his price is named; the futility of the prayer not to be led into temptation, when it is only by resisting temptation that men grow strong—these things blaze out in a way that makes us fairly blink with the truth of them.

It is Mark Twain's greatest short story. It is fine that it should be that, as well as much more than that; for he was no longer essentially a story-teller. He had become more than ever a moralist and a sage. Having seen all of the world, and richly enjoyed and deeply suffered at its hands, he sat now as in a seat of judgment, regarding the passing show and recording his philosophies.

CCIII

AN IMPERIAL TRAGEDY

FOR the summer they went to Kaltenleutgeben, just out of Vienna, where they had the Villa Paulhof, and it was while they were there, September 10, 1898, that the Empress Elizabeth of Austria was assassinated at Geneva by an Italian vagabond, whose motive seemed to have been to gain notoriety. The news was brought to them one evening, just at supper-time, by Countess Wydenbruck-Esterhazy.

Clemens wrote to Twichell:

That good & unoffending lady, the Empress, is killed by a madman, & I am living in the midst of world-history again. The Queen's Jubilee last year, the invasion of the Reichsrath by the police, & now this murder, which will still be talked of & described & painted a thousand years from now. To have a *personal friend* of the wearer of two crowns burst in at the gate in the deep dusk of the evening & say, in a voice broken with tears, "My God! the Empress is murdered," & fly toward her home before we can utter a question—why, it brings the giant event home to you, makes you a part of it & personally interested; it is as if your neighbor Antony should come flying & say, "Cæsar is butchered—the head of the world is fallen!"

Of course there is no talk but of this. The mourning is universal and genuine, the consternation is stupefying. The Austrian Empire is being draped with black. Vienna will be a spectacle to see by next Saturday, when the funeral cortège marches.

Clemens and the others went into Vienna for the funeral ceremonies and witnessed them from the windows

of the new Krantz Hotel, which faces the Capuchin church where the royal dead lie buried. It was a grandly impressive occasion, a pageant of uniforms of the allied nations that make up the Empire of Austria. Clemens wrote of it at considerable length, and sent the article to Mr. Rogers to offer to the magazines. Later, however, he recalled it—just why is not clear. In one place he wrote:

> Twice the Empress entered Vienna in state; the first time was in 1854, when she was a bride of seventeen, & when she rode in measureless pomp through a world of gay flags & decorations down the streets, walled on both hands with the press of shouting & welcoming subjects; & the second time was last Wednesday, when she entered the city in her coffin, & moved down the same streets in the dead of night under waving black flags, between human walls again, but everywhere was a deep stillness now & a stillness emphasized rather than broken by the muffled hoof-beats of the long cavalcade over pavements cushioned with sand, & the low sobbing of gray-headed women who had witnessed the first entrance, forty-four years before, when she & they were young & unaware. . . . She was so blameless—the Empress; & so beautiful in mind & heart, in person & spirit; & whether with the crown upon her head, or without it & nameless, a grace to the human race, almost a justification of its creation; would be, indeed, but that the animal that struck her down re-establishes the doubt.

They passed a quiet summer at Kaltenleutgeben. Clemens wrote some articles, did some translating of German plays, and worked on his "Gospel," an elaboration of his old essay on contenting one's soul through selfishness, later to be published as *What is Man?* A. C. Dunham and Rev. Dr. Parker, of Hartford, came to Vienna, and Clemens found them and brought them out to Kaltenleutgeben and read them chapters of his doctrines, which, he said, Mrs. Clemens would not let him print. Dr. Parker and Dunham returned to Hartford and reported Mark Twain more than ever a philosopher; also that he was the "center of notability and his house a court."

CCIV

THE SECOND WINTER IN VIENNA

THE Clemens family did not return to the Metropole for the winter, but went to the new Krantz, already mentioned, where they had a handsome and commodious suite looking down on the Neuer Markt and on the beautiful façade of the Capuchin church, with the great cathedral only a step away. There they passed another brilliant and busy winter. Never in Europe had they been more comfortably situated; attention had been never more lavishly paid to them. Their drawing-room was a salon which acquired the name of the "Second Embassy." Clemens in his note-book wrote:

> During 8 years now I have filled the position—with some credit, I trust, of self-appointed ambassador-at-large of the United States of America—without salary.

Which was a joke; but there was a large grain of truth in it, for Mark Twain, more than any other American in Europe, was regarded as typically representing his nation and received more lavish honors.

It had become the fashion to consult him on every question of public interest, for he was certain to say something worth printing, whether seriously or otherwise. When the Tsar of Russia proposed the disarmament of the nations William T. Stead, editor of the *Review of Reviews*, wrote for Mark Twain's opinion. He replied:

> DEAR MR. STEAD,—The Tsar is ready to disarm. I am ready to disarm. Collect the others; it should not be much of a task now. MARK TWAIN.

He was on a tide of prosperity once more, one that was to continue now until the end. He no longer had any serious financial qualms. He could afford to be independent. He refused ten thousand dollars for a tobacco indorsement, though he liked the tobacco well enough; and he was aware that even royalty was willing to put a value on its opinions. He declined ten thousand dollars a year for five years to lend his name as editor of a humorous periodical, though there was no reason to suppose that the paper would be otherwise than creditably conducted. He declined lecture propositions from Pond at the rate of about one a month. He could get along without these things, he said, and still preserve some remnants of self-respect. In a letter to Rogers he said:

Pond offers me $10,000 for 10 nights, but I do not feel strongly tempted. Mrs. Clemens ditto.

Early in 1899 he wrote to Howells that Mrs. Clemens had proved to him that they owned a house and furniure in Hartford, that his English and American copyrights paid an income on the equivalent of two hundred thousand dollars, and that they had one hundred and seven thousand dollars' accumulation in the bank.

"I have been out and bought a box of 6c. cigars," he says; "I was smoking 4½c. before."

The things that men are most likely to desire had come to Mark Twain, and no man was better qualified to rejoice in them. That supreme, elusive thing which we call happiness might have been his now but for the tragedy of human bereavement and the torture of human ills. That he did rejoice—reveled indeed like a boy in his new fortunes, the honors paid him, and in all that gay Viennese life—there is no doubt. He could wave aside care and grief and remorse, forget their very existence, it seemed; but in the end he had only driven them ahead a little way

and they waited by his path. Once, after reciting his occupations and successes, he wrote:

All these things might move and interest one. But how desperately more I have been moved to-night by the thought of a little old copy in the nursery of *At the Back of the North Wind*. Oh, what happy days they were when that book was read, and how Susy loved it! . . . Death is so kind, benignant, to whom he loves, but he goes by us others & will not look our way.

And to Twichell a few days later:

A Hartford with no Susy in it—& no Ned Bunce!—It is not the city of Hartford, it is the city of Heartbreak. . . . It seems only a few weeks since I saw Susy last—yet that was 1895 & this is 1899. . . .

My work does not go well to-day. It failed yesterday—& the day before & the day before that. And so I have concluded to put the MS. in the waste-basket & meddle with some other subject. I was trying to write an article advocating the quadrupling of the salaries of our ministers & ambassadors, & the devising of an official dress for them to wear. It seems an easy theme, yet I couldn't do the thing to my satisfaction. All I got out of it was an article on Monaco & Monte Carlo—matters not connected with the subject at all. Still, that was something —it's better than a total loss.

He finished the article—"Diplomatic Pay and Clothes" —in which he shows how absurd it is for America to expect proper representation on the trifling salaries paid to her foreign ministers, as compared with those allowed by other nations.

He prepared also a reminiscent article—the old tale of the shipwrecked *Hornet* and the magazine article intended as his literary début a generation ago. Now and again he worked on some one of the several unfinished longer tales, but brought none of them to completion. The German drama interested him. Once he wrote to Mr. Rogers that he had translated "In Purgatory"

and sent it to Charles Frohman, who pronounced it "all jabber and no play."

Curious, too, for it tears these Austrians to pieces with laughter. When I read it, now, it seems entirely silly; but when I see it on the stage it is exceedingly funny.

He undertook a play for the Burg Theater, a collaboration with a Vienna journalist, Siegmund Schlesinger. Schlesinger had been successful with several dramas, and agreed with Clemens to do some plays dealing with American themes. One of them was to be called "Die Goldgraeberin," that is, "The Woman Gold-Miner." Another, "The Rival Candidates," was to present the humors of female suffrage. Schlesinger spoke very little English, and Clemens always had difficulty in comprehending rapid-fire German. So the work did not progress very well. By the time they had completed a few scenes of mining-drama the interest died, and they good-naturedly agreed that it would be necessary to wait until they understood each other's language more perfectly before they could go on with the project. Frau Kati Schratt, later the favorite of Emperor Franz Josef, but then leading comédienne of the Burg Theater, is said to have been cast for the leading part in the mining-play; and Director-General Herr Schlenther, head of the Burg Theater management, was deeply disappointed. He had never doubted that a play built by Schlesinger and Mark Twain, with Frau Schratt in the leading rôle, would have been a great success.

Clemens continued the subject of Christian Science that winter. He wrote a number of articles, mainly criticizing Mrs. Eddy and her financial methods, and for the first time conceived the notion of a book on the subject. The new hierarchy not only amused but impressed him. He realized that it was no ephemeral propaganda, that its appeal to human need was strong, and that its system of

organization was masterful and complete. To Twichell he wrote:

> Somehow I continue to feel sure of that cult's colossal future. . . . I am selling my Lourdes stock already & buying Christian Science trust. I regard it as the Standard Oil of the future.

He laid the article away for the time and, as was his custom, put the play quite out of his mind and invented a postal-check which would be far more simple than post-office orders, because one could buy them in any quantity and denomination and keep them on hand for immediate use, making them individually payable merely by writing in the name of the payee. It seems a fine, simple scheme, one that might have been adopted by the government long ago; but the idea has been advanced in one form or another several times since then, and still remains at this writing unadopted. He wrote John Hay about it, remarking at the close that the government officials would probably not care to buy it as soon as they found they couldn't kill Christians with it.

He prepared a lengthy article on the subject, in dialogue form, making it all very clear and convincing, but for some reason none of the magazines would take it. Perhaps it seemed too easy, too simple, too obvious. Great ideas, once developed, are often like that.

CCV

SPEECHES THAT WERE NOT MADE

IN a volume of Mark Twain's collected speeches there is one entitled "German for the Hungarians—Address at the Jubilee Celebration of the Emancipation of the Hungarian Press, March 26, 1899." An introductory paragraph states that the ministers and members of Parliament were present, and that the subject was the "Ausgleich"—*i.e.*, the arrangement for the apportionment of the taxes between Hungary and Austria. The speech as there set down begins:

> Now that we are all here together I think that it will be a good idea to arrange the *Ausgleich*. If you will act for Hungary I shall be quite willing to act for Austria, and this is the very time for it.

It is an excellent speech, full of good-feeling and good-humor, but it was never delivered. It is only a speech that Mark Twain *intended* to deliver, and permitted to be copied by a representative of the press before he started for Budapest.

It was a grand dinner, brilliant and inspiring, and when Mark Twain was presented to that distinguished company he took a text from something the introducer had said and became so interested in it that his prepared speech wholly disappeared from his memory.

> I think I will never embarrass myself with a set speech again [he wrote Twichell]. My memory is old and rickety and cannot

stand the strain. But I had this luck. What I did was to furnish a text for a part of the splendid speech which was made by the greatest living orator of the European world—a speech which it was a great delight to listen to, although I did not understand any word of it, it being in Hungarian. I was glad I came, it was a great night, & I heard all the great men in the German tongue.

The family accompanied Clemens to Budapest, and while there met Franz, son of Louis Kossuth, and dined with him.

I assure you [wrote Mrs. Clemens] that I felt stirred, and I kept saying to myself "This is Louis Kossuth's son." He came to our room one day, and we had quite a long and a very pleasant talk together. He is a man one likes immensely. He has a quiet dignity about him that is very winning. He seems to be a man highly esteemed in Hungary. If I am not mistaken, the last time I saw the old picture of his father it was hanging in a room that we turned into a music-room for Susy at the farm.

They were most handsomely treated in Budapest. A large delegation greeted them on arrival, and a carriage and attendants were placed continually at their disposal. They remained several days, and Clemens showed his appreciation by giving a reading for charity.

It was hinted to Mark Twain that spring, that before leaving Vienna it would be proper for him to pay his respects to Emperor Franz Josef, who had expressed a wish to meet him. Clemens promptly complied with the formalities and the meeting was arranged. He had a warm admiration for the Austrian Emperor, and naturally prepared himself a little for what he wanted to say to him. He claimed afterward that he had compacted a sort of speech into a single German sentence of eighteen words. He did not make use of it, however. When he arrived at the royal palace and was presented, the Emperor him-

self began in such an entirely informal way that it did no occur to his visitor to deliver his prepared German sentence. When he returned from the audience he said:

"We got along very well. I proposed to him a plan to exterminate the human race by withdrawing the oxygen from the air for a period of two minutes. I said Szczepanik would invent it for him. I think it impressed him. After a while, in the course of our talk I remembered and told the Emperor I had prepared and memorized a very good speech but had forgotten it. He was very agreeable about it. He said a speech wasn't necessary. He seemed to be a most kind-hearted emperor, with a great deal of plain, good, attractive human nature about him. Necessarily he must have or he couldn't have unbent to me as he did. I couldn't unbend if I were an emperor. I should feel the stiffness of the position. Franz Josef doesn't feel it. He is just a natural man, although an emperor. I was greatly impressed by him, and I liked him exceedingly. His face is always the face of a pleasant man and he has a fine sense of humor. It is the Emperor's personality and the confidence all ranks have in him that preserve the real political serenity in what has an outside appearance of being the opposite. He is a man as well as an emperor—an emperor and a man."

Clemens and Howells were corresponding with something of the old-time frequency. The work that Mark Twain was doing—thoughtful work with serious intent—appealed strongly to Howells. He wrote:

> You are the greatest man of your sort that ever lived, and there is no use saying anything else. . . . You have pervaded your century almost more than any other man of letters, if not more; and it is astonishing how you keep spreading. . . . You are my "shadow of a great rock in a weary land" more than any other writer.

Clemens, who was reading Howells's serial, "Their Silver-Wedding Journey," then running in *Harper's Magazine*, responded:

You are old enough to be a weary man with paling interests, but you do not show it; you do your work in the same old, delicate & delicious & forceful & searching & perfect way. I don't know how you can—but I suspect. I suspect that to you there is still dignity in human life, & that man is not a joke—a poor joke—the poorest that was ever contrived. Since I wrote my Bible [1] (last year), which Mrs. Clemens loathes & shudders over & will not listen to the last half nor allow me to print any part of it, man is not to me the respect-worthy person he was before, & so I have lost my pride in him & can't write gaily nor praisefully about him any more. . . .

Next morning. I have been reading the morning paper. I do it every morning—well knowing that I shall find in it the usual depravities & basenesses & hypocrisies and cruelties that make up civilization & cause me to put in the rest of the day pleading for the damnation of the human race. I cannot seem to get my prayers answered, yet I do not despair.

He was not greatly changed. Perhaps he had fewer illusions and less iridescent ones, and certainly he had more sorrow; but the letters to Howells do not vary greatly from those written twenty-five years before. There is even in them a touch of the old pretense as to Mrs. Clemens's violence.

I mustn't stop to play now or I shall never get those helfiard letters answered. (That is not my spelling. It is Mrs. Clemens's. I have told her the right way a thousand times, but it does no good, she never remembers.)

All through this Vienna period (as during several years before and after) Henry Rogers was in full charge of Mark Twain's American affairs. Clemens wrote him almost daily, and upon every matter, small or large, that

[1] The "Gospel," *What is Man?*

developed, or seemed likely to develop, in his undertakings. The complications growing out of the type machine and Webster failures were endless.[1] The disposal of the manuscripts alone was work for a literary agent. The consideration of proposed literary, dramatic, and financial schemes must have required not only thought, but time. Yet Mr. Rogers comfortably and genially took care of all these things and his own tremendous affairs besides, and apologized sometimes when he felt, perhaps, that he had wavered a little in his attention. Clemens once wrote him:

Oh, dear me, you don't have to excuse yourself for neglecting me; you are entitled to the highest praise for being so limitlessly patient and good in bothering with my confused affairs, and pulling me out of a hole every little while.

It makes me lazy, the way that Steel stock is rising. If I were lazier—like Rice—nothing could keep me from retiring. But I work right along, like a poor person. I shall figure up the rise, as the figures come in, and push up my literary prices accordingly, till I get my literature up to where nobody can afford it but the family. (N. B.—Look here, are you charging storage? I am not going to stand that, you know.) Meantime, I note those encouraging illogical words of yours about my not worrying because I am to be rich when I am 68; why didn't you have Cheiro make it 90, so that I could have *plenty* of room?

It would be jolly good if some one should succeed in making a play out of "Is He Dead?"[2] From what I gather from dramatists, he will have his hands something more than full—but let him struggle, let him struggle.

[1] "I hope to goodness I sha'n't get you into any more jobs such as the type-setter and Webster business and the Bliss-Harper campaigns have been. Oh, they were sickeners." [Clemens to Rogers, November 12, 1898.]

[2] Clemens himself had attempted to make a play out of his story "Is He Dead?" and had forwarded the MS. to Rogers. Later he wrote: "Put 'Is He Dead?' in the fire. God will bless you. I too. I started to convince myself that I could write a play, or couldn't. I'm convinced. Nothing can disturb that conviction."

Is there some way, honest or otherwise, by which you can get a copy of Mayo's play, "Pudd'nhead Wilson," for me? There is a capable young Austrian here who saw it in New York and wants to translate it and see if he can stage it here. *I* don't think these people here would understand it or take to it, but he thinks it will pay us to try.

A couple of London dramatists want to bargain with me for the right to make a high comedy out of the "Million-Pound Note." Barkis is willing.

This is but one of the briefer letters. Most of them were much longer and of more elaborate requirements. Also they overflowed with the gaiety of good-fortune and with gratitude. From Vienna in 1899 Clemens wrote:

Why, it is just splendid! I have nothing to do but sit around and watch you set the hen and hatch out those big broods and make my living for me. Don't you wish you had somebody to do the same for you?—a magician who can turn steel and copper and Brooklyn gas into gold. I mean to raise your wages again—I begin to feel that I can afford it.

I think the hen ought to have a name; she must be called *Unberufen*. That is a German word which is equivalent to "*'sh! hush!* don't let the spirits hear you!" The superstition is that if you happen to let fall any grateful jubilation over good luck that you've had or are hoping to have you must shut square off and say "Unberufen!" and *knock wood*. The word drives the evil spirits away; otherwise they would divine your joy or your hopes and go to work and spoil your game. Set her again—do!

Oh, look here! You are just like everybody; merely because I am literary you think I'm a commercial somnambulist, and am not watching you with all that money in your hands. Bless you, I've got a description of you and a photograph in every police-office in Christendom, with the remark appended: "Look out for a handsome, tall, slender young man with a gray mustache and courtly manners and an address well calculated to deceive, calling himself by the name of Smith." Don't you try to get away—it won't work.

SPEECHES THAT WERE NOT MADE

From the note-book:

Midnight. At Miss Bailie's home for English governesses. Two comedies & some songs and ballads. Was asked to speak & did it. (And rung in the "Mexican Plug.")

A Voice. "The Princess Hohenlohe wishes you to write on her fan."

"With pleasure—where is she?"

"At your elbow."

I turned & took the fan & said, "Your Highness's place is in a fairy tale; & by & by I mean to write that tale," whereat she laughed a happy girlish laugh, & we moved through the crowd to get to a writing-table—& to get in a strong light so that I could see her better. Beautiful little creature, with the dearest friendly ways & sincerities & simplicities & sweetnesses—the ideal princess of the fairy tales. She is 16 or 17, I judge.

Mental Telegraphy. Mrs. Clemens was pouring out the coffee this morning; I unfolded the *Neue Freie Presse*, began to read a paragraph & said:

"They've found a new way to tell genuine gems from false—"

"By the Röntgen ray!" she exclaimed.

That is what I was going to say. She had not seen the paper, & there had been no talk about the ray or gems by herself or by me. It was a plain case of telegraphy.

No man that ever lived has ever done a thing to please God—primarily. It was done to please himself, *then* God next.

The Being who to me is the real God is the one who created this majestic universe & rules it. He is the only originator, the only originator of thoughts; thoughts suggested from within, not from without; the originator of colors & of all their possible combinations; of forces & the laws that govern them; of forms & shapes of *all* forms—man has never invented a new one. He is the only originator. He made the materials of all things; He made the laws by which, & by which only, man may combine them into the machines & other things which outside influences suggest to him. He made character—man can portray it but not "create" it, for He is the only creator.

He is the perfect artisan, the perfect artist.

CCVI

A SUMMER IN SWEDEN

APART of the tragedy of their trip around the world had been the development in Jean Clemens of a malady which time had identified as epilepsy. The loss of one daughter and the invalidism of another was the burden which this household had now to bear. Of course they did not for a moment despair of a cure for the beautiful girl who had been so cruelly stricken, and they employed any agent that promised relief.

They decided now to go to London, in the hope of obtaining beneficial treatment. They left Vienna at the end of May, followed to the station by a great crowd, who loaded their compartment with flowers and lingered on the platform waving and cheering, some of them in tears, while the train pulled away. Leschetizky himself was among them, and Wilbrandt, the author of the *Master of Palmyra*, and many artists and other notables, "most of whom," writes Mrs. Clemens, "we shall probably never see again in this world."

Their Vienna sojourn had been one of the most brilliant periods of their life, as well as one of the saddest. The memory of Susy had been never absent, and the failing health of Jean was a gathering cloud.

They stopped a day or two at Prague, where they were invited by the Prince of Thurn and Taxis to visit his castle. It gave them a glimpse of the country life of the Bohemian nobility which was most interesting. The Prince's children were entirely familiar with *Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*, which they had read both in English and in the translation.

They journeyed to London by way of Cologne, arriving by the end of May. Poultney Bigelow was there, and had recently been treated with great benefit by osteopathy (then known as the Swedish movements), as practised by Heinrick Kellgren at Sanna, Sweden. Clemens was all interest concerning Kellgren's method and eager to try it for his daughter's malady. He believed she could be benefited, and they made preparation to spend some months at least in Sanna. They remained several weeks in London, where they were welcomed with hospitality extraordinary. They had hardly arrived when they were invited by Lord Salisbury to Hatfield House, and by James Bryce to Portland Place, and by Canon Wilberforce to Dean's Yard. A rather amusing incident happened at one of the luncheon-parties. Canon Wilberforce was there and left rather early. When Clemens was ready to go there was just one hat remaining. It was not his, and he suspected, by the initials on the inside, that it belonged to Canon Wilberforce. However, it fitted him exactly and he wore it away. That evening he wrote:

PRINCE OF WALES HOTEL, DE VERE GARDENS,
July 3, 1899.

DEAR CANON WILBERFORCE,—It is 8 P.M. During the past four hours I have not been able to take anything that did not belong to me; during all that time I have not been able to stretch a fact beyond the frontiers of truth try as I might, & meantime, not only my morals have moved the astonishment of all who have come in contact with me, but my manners have gained more compliments than they have been accustomed to. This mystery is causing my family much alarm. It is difficult to account for it. I find I haven't my own hat. Have you developed any novelties of conduct since you left Mr. Murray's, & have they been of a character to move the concern of your friends? I think it must be this that has put me under this happy charm; but, oh dear! I tremble for the other man!

Sincerely yours,
S. L. CLEMENS.

Scarcely was this note on its way to Wilberforce when the following one arrived, having crossed it in transit:

July 3, 1899.

DEAR MR. CLEMENS,—I have been conscious of a vivacity and facility of expression this afternoon beyond the normal and I have just discovered the reason!! I have seen the historic signature "Mark Twain" in my hat!! Doubtless you have been suffering from a corresponding dullness & have wondered why. I departed precipitately, the hat stood on my umbrella and was a new Lincoln & Bennett—it fitted me exactly and I did not discover the mistake till I got in this afternoon. Please forgive me. If you should be passing this way to-morrow will you look in and change hats? or shall I send it to the hotel?

I am, very sincerely yrs.,

20 Dean's Yard. BASIL WILBERFORCE.

Clemens was demanded by all the bohemian clubs, the White Friars, the Vagabonds, the Savage, the Beefsteak, and the Authors. He spoke to them, and those "Mark Twain Evenings" have become historic occasions in each of the several institutions that gave him welcome. At the Vagabonds he told them the watermelon story, and at the White Friars he reviewed the old days when he had been elected to that society; "days," he said, "when all Londoners were talking about nothing else than that they had discovered Livingstone, and that the lost Sir Roger Tichborne had been found and they were trying him for it."

At the Savage Club, too, he recalled old times and old friends, and particularly that first London visit, his days in the club twenty-seven years before.

"I was 6 feet 4 in those days," he said. "Now I am 5 feet 8½ and daily diminishing in altitude, and the shrinkage of my principles goes on. . . . Irving was here then, is here now. Stanley is here, and Joe Hatton, but Charles Reade is gone and Tom Hood and Harry Lee and Canon Kingsley. In those days you could have carried Kipling

around in a lunch-basket; now he fills the world. I was young and foolish then; now I am old and foolisher."

At the Authors Club he paid a special tribute to Rudyard Kipling, whose dangerous illness in New York City and whose daughter's death had aroused the anxiety and sympathy of the entire American nation. It had done much to bring England and America closer together, Clemens said. Then he added that he had been engaged the past eight days compiling a pun and had brought it there to lay at their feet, not to ask for their indulgence, but for their applause. It was this:

"Since England and America have been joined in Kipling, may they not be severed in Twain."

Hundreds of puns had been made on his pen-name, but this was probably his first and only attempt.

They arrived in Sweden early in July and remained until October. Jean was certainly benefited by the Kellgren treatment, and they had for a time the greatest hopes of her complete recovery. Clemens became enthusiastic over osteopathy, and wrote eloquently to every one, urging each to try the great new curative which was certain to restore universal health. He wrote long articles on Kellgren and his science, largely justified, no doubt, for certainly miraculous benefits were recorded; though Clemens was not likely to underestimate a thing which appealed to both his imagination and his reason. Writing to Twichell he concluded, with his customary optimism over any new benefit:

Ten years hence no sane man will call a doctor except when the knife must be used—& such cases will be rare. The educated physician will himself be an osteopath. Dave will become one after he has finished his medical training. Young Harmony ought to become one *now*. I do not believe there is any difference between Kellgren's science and osteopathy; but I am sending to America to find out. I want osteopathy to prosper; it is com-

mon sense & scientific, & cures a wider range of ailments than the doctor's methods can reach.

Twichell was traveling in Europe that summer, and wrote from Switzerland:

I seemed ever and anon to see you and me swinging along those glorious Alpine woods, staring at the new unfoldings of splendor that every turn brought into view—talking, talking, endlessly talking the days through—days forever memorable to me. That was twenty-one years ago; think of it! We were youngsters then, Mark, and how keen our relish of everything was! Well, I can enjoy myself now; but not with that zest and rapture. Oh, a lot of items of our tramp travel in 1878 that I had long forgotten came back to me as we sped through that enchanted region, and if I wasn't on duty with Venice I'd stop and set down some of them, but Venice must be attended to. For one thing, there is Howells's book to be read at such intervals as can be snatched from the quick-time march on which our rustling leader keeps us. However, in Venice so far we want to be gazing pretty steadily from morning till night, and by the grace of the gondola we can do it without exhaustion. Really I am drunk with Venice.

But Clemens was full of Sweden. The skies there and the sunsets he thought surpassed any he had ever known. On an evening in September he wrote:

Dear Joe,—I've no business in here—I ought to be outside. I shall never see another sunset to begin with it this side of heaven. Venice? land, what a poor interest that is! This is the place to be. I have seen about 60 sunsets here; & a good 40 of them were away & beyond anything I had ever imagined before for dainty & exquisite & marvelous beauty & infinite change & variety. America? Italy? the tropics? They have no notion of what a sunset ought to be. And this one—this unspeakable wonder! It discounts all the rest. It brings the tears, it is so unutterably beautiful.

Clemens read a book during his stay in Sweden which interested him deeply. It was the *Open Question*, by

Elizabeth Robbins—a fine study of life's sterner aspects. When he had finished he was moved to write the author this encouraging word:

Dear Miss Robbins,—A relative of Matthew Arnold lent us your *Open Question* the other day, and Mrs. Clemens and I are in your debt. I am not able to put in words my feeling about the book—my admiration of its depth and truth and wisdom and courage, and the fine and great literary art and grace of the setting. At your age you cannot have lived the half of the things that are in the book, nor personally penetrated to the deeps it deals in, nor covered its wide horizons with your very own vision—and so, what is your secret? how have you written this miracle? Perhaps one must concede that genius has no youth, but starts with the ripeness of age and old experience.

Well, in any case, I am grateful to you. I have not been so enriched by a book for many years, nor so enchanted by one. I seem to be using strong language; still, I have weighed it.

Sincerely yours,

S. L. Clemens.

CCVII

30, WELLINGTON COURT

CLEMENS himself took the Kellgren treatment and received a good deal of benefit.

"I have come back in sound condition and braced for work," he wrote MacAlister, upon his return to London. "A long, steady, faithful siege of it, and I begin *now* in five minutes."

They had settled in a small apartment at 30, Wellington Court, Albert Gate, where they could be near the London branch of the Kellgren institution, and he had a workroom with Chatto & Windus, his publishers. His work, however, was mainly writing speeches, for he was entertained constantly, and it seemed impossible for him to escape. His note-book became a mere jumble of engagements. He did write an article or a story now and then, one of which, "My First Lie, and How I Got Out of It," was made the important Christmas feature of the New York Sunday *World*.[1]

Another article of this time was the "St. Joan of Arc," which several years later appeared in *Harper's Magazine*. This article was originally written as the Introduction of the English translation of the official record of the trials and rehabilitation of Joan, then about to be elaborately issued. Clemens was greatly pleased at being invited to prepare the Introduction of this important volume, but a smug person with pedagogic proclivities was in charge

[1] Now included in the *Hadleyburg* volume, "Complete Works."

of the copy and proceeded to edit Mark Twain's manuscript, to alter its phrasing to conform to his own ideas of the Queen's English. Then he had it all nicely typewritten, and returned it to show how much he had improved it, and to receive thanks and compliments. He did not receive any thanks. Clemens recorded a few of the remarks that he made when he saw his edited manuscript:

I will not deny that my feelings rose to 104 in the shade. "The idea! That this long-eared animal—this literary kangaroo —this illiterate hostler with his skull full of axle-grease— this . . ." But I stopped there, for this was not the Christian spirit.

His would-be editor received a prompt order to return the manuscript, after which Clemens wrote a letter, some of which will go very well here.

Dear Mr. X.,—I have examined the first page of my amended Introduction, & will begin now & jot down some notes upon your corrections. If I find any changes which shall not seem to me to be improvements I will point out my reasons for thinking so. In this way I may chance to be helpful to you, & thus profit you perhaps as much as you have desired to profit me.

First Paragraph. "Jeanne d'Arc." This is rather cheaply pedantic, & is not in very good taste. Joan is not known by that name among plain people of our race & tongue. I notice that the name of the Deity occurs several times in the brief instalment of the Trials which you have favored me with. To be consistent, it will be necessary that you strike out "God" & put in "Dieu." Do not neglect this.

Second Paragraph. Now you have begun on my punctuation. Don't you realize that you ought not to intrude your help in a delicate art like that with your limitations? And do you think that you have added just the right smear of polish to the closing clause of the sentence?

Third Paragraph. Ditto.

Fourth Paragraph. Your word "directly" is misleading; it

could be construed to mean "at once." Plain clarity is better than ornate obscurity. I note your sensitive marginal remark: "*Rather unkind to French feelings—referring to Moscow.*" Indeed I have not been concerning myself about French feelings, but only about stating the facts. I have said several uncourteous things about the French—calling them a "nation of ingrates" in one place—but you have been so busy editing commas & semicolons that you overlooked them & failed to get scared at them. The next paragraph ends with a slur at the French, but I have reasons for thinking you mistook it for a compliment. It is discouraging to try to penetrate a mind like yours. You ought to get it out & dance on it.

That would take some of the rigidity out of it. And you ought to use it sometimes; that would help. If you had done this every now & then along through life it would not have petrified.

Fifth Paragraph. Thus far I regard this as your masterpiece! You are really perfect in the great art of reducing simple & dignified speech to clumsy & vapid commonplace.

Sixth Paragraph. You have a singularly fine & aristocratic disrespect for homely & unpretending English. Every time I use "go back" you get out your polisher & slick it up to "return." "Return" is suited only to the drawing-room—it is ducal, & says itself with a simper & a smirk.

Seventh Paragraph. "Permission" is ducal. Ducal and affected. "*Her*" great days were *not* "over," they were only half over. Didn't you know that? Haven't you read anything at all about Joan of Arc? The truth is you do not pay any attention; I told you on my very first page that the public part of her career lasted two years, & you have forgotten it already. You really must get your mind out and have it repaired; you see yourself that it is all caked together.

Eighth Paragraph. She "rode away *to* assault & capture a stronghold." Very well; but you do not tell us whether she succeeded or not. You should not worry the reader with uncertainties like that. I will remind you once more that clarity is a good thing in literature. An apprentice cannot do better than keep this useful rule in mind.

Ninth Paragraph. "Known" history. That word has a polish which is too indelicate for me; there doesn't seem to

be any sense in it. This would have surprised me last week.

. . . "Breaking a lance" is a knightly & sumptuous phrase, & I honor it for its hoary age & for the faithful service it has done in the prize-composition of the school-girl, but I have ceased from employing it since I got my puberty, & must solemnly object to fathering it here. And, besides, it makes me hint that I have broken one of those things before in honor of the Maid, an intimation not justified by the facts. I did not break any lances or other furniture; I only wrote a book about her.

Truly yours,

MARK TWAIN.

It cost me something to restrain myself and say these smooth & half-flattering things of this immeasurable idiot, but I did it, & have never regretted it. For it is higher & nobler to be kind to even a shad like him than just. . . . I could have said hundreds of unpleasant things about this tadpole, but I did not even feel them.

Yet, in the end, he seems not to have sent the letter. Writing it had served every purpose.

An important publishing event of 1899 was the issue by the American Publishing Company of Mark Twain's "Complete Works in Uniform Edition." Clemens had looked forward to the day when this should be done, perhaps feeling that an assembling of his literary family in symmetrical dress constituted a sort of official recognition of his authorship. Brander Matthews was selected to write the Introduction and prepared a fine "Biographical Criticism," which pleased Clemens, though perhaps he did not entirely agree with its views. Himself of a different cast of mind, he nevertheless admired Matthews.

Writing to Twichell he said:

When you say, "I like Brander Matthews, he impresses me as a man of parts & power," I back you, right up to the hub—I feel the same way. And when you say he has earned your gratitude for cuffing me for my crimes against the Leatherstockings & the Vicar I ain't making any objection. *Dern* your gratitude!

His article is as sound as a nut. Brander knows literature & loves it; he can talk about it & keep his temper; he can state his case so lucidly & so fairly & so forcibly that you have to agree with him even when you *don't* agree with him; & he can discover & praise such merits as a book has even when they are merely half a dozen diamonds scattered through an acre of mud. And so he has a right to be a critic.

To detail just the opposite of the above invoice is to describe me. I haven't any right to criticize books, & I don't do it except when I hate them. I often want to criticize Jane Austen, but her books madden me so that I can't conceal my frenzy from the reader, & therefore I have to stop every time I begin.[1]

Clemens also introduced the "Uniform Edition" with an Author's Preface, the jurisdiction of which, he said, was "restricted to furnishing reasons for the publication of the collection as a whole."

This is not easy to do. Aside from the ordinary commercial reasons I find none that I can offer with dignity. I cannot say without immodesty that the books have merit; I cannot say without immodesty that the public want a "Uniform Edition"; I cannot say without immodesty that a "Uniform Edition" will turn the nation toward high ideals & elevated thought; I cannot say without immodesty that a "Uniform Edition" will eradicate crime, though I think it will. I find no reason that I can offer without immodesty except the rather poor one that I should like to see a "Uniform Edition" myself. It is nothing; a cat could say it about her kittens. Still, I believe I will stand upon that. I have to have a Preface & a reason, by law of custom, & the reason which I am putting forward is at least without offense.

[1] Once at a dinner given to Matthews, Mark Twain made a speech which consisted almost entirely of intonations of the name "Brander Matthews" to express various shades of human emotion. It would be hopeless, of course, to attempt to convey in print any idea of this effort, which, by those who heard it, is said to have been a masterpiece of vocalization.

CCVIII

MARK TWAIN AND THE WARS

ENGLISH troubles in South Africa came to a head that autumn. On the day when England's ultimatum to the Boers expired Clemens wrote:

LONDON, 3.07 P.M., *Wednesday, October* 11, 1899. The time is up! Without a doubt the first shot in the war is being fired to-day in South Africa *at this moment. Some* man had to be the first to fall; he has fallen. Whose heart is broken by this murder? For, be he Boer or be he Briton, it is murder, & England committed it by the hand of Chamberlain & the Cabinet, the lackeys of Cecil Rhodes & his Forty Thieves, the South Africa Company.

Mark Twain would naturally sympathize with the Boer —the weaker side, the man defending his home. He knew that for the sake of human progress England must conquer and must be upheld, but his heart was all the other way. In January, 1900, he wrote a characteristic letter to Twichell, which conveys pretty conclusively his sentiments concerning the two wars then in progress.

DEAR JOE,—Apparently we are not proposing to set the Filipinos free & give their islands to them; & apparently we are not proposing to hang the priests & confiscate their property. If these things are so the war out there has no interest for me.

I have just been examining Chapter LXX of *Following the Equator* to see if the Boer's old military effectiveness is holding out. It reads curiously as if it had been written about the present war.

I believe that in the next chapter my notion of the Boer was rightly conceived. He is popularly called uncivilized; I do not know why. Happiness, food, shelter, clothing, wholesome labor, modest & rational ambitions, honesty, kindliness, hospitality, love of freedom & limitless courage to fight for it, composure & fortitude in time of disaster, patience in time of hardship & privation, absence of noise & brag in time of victory, contentment with humble & peaceful life void of insane excitements—if there is a higher & better form of civilization than this I am not aware of it & do not know where to look for it. I suppose that we have the habit of imagining that a lot of artistic & intellectual & other artificialities must be added or it isn't complete. We & the English have these latter; but as we lack the great bulk of those others I think the Boer civilization is the best of the two. My idea of our civilization is that it is a shoddy, poor thing & full of cruelties, vanities, arrogancies, meannesses, & hypocrisies.

Provided we could get something better in the place of it. But that is not possible perhaps. Poor as it is, it is better than *real* savagery, therefore we must stand by it, extend it, & (in public) praise it. And so we must not utter any hurtful word about England in these days, nor fail to hope that she will win in this war, for her defeat & fall would be an irremediable disaster for the mangy human race. Naturally, then, I am for England; but she is profoundly in the wrong, Joe, & no (instructed) Englishman doubts it. At least that is my belief.

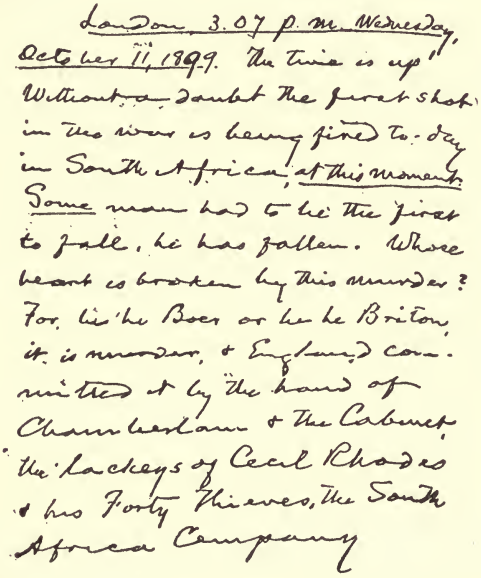
Writing to Howells somewhat later, he calls the conflict in South Africa a "sordid and criminal war," and says that every day he is writing (in his head) bitter magazine articles against it.

But I have to stop with that. Even if wrong—& she is wrong —England must be upheld. He is an enemy of the human race who shall speak against her now. Why *was* the human race created? Or at least why wasn't something creditable created in place of it? . . . I talk the war with both sides—always waiting until the other man introduces the topic. Then I say, "My head is with the Briton, but my heart & such rags of morals as I have are with the Boer—now we will talk, unembarrassed and without prejudice." And so we discuss & have no trouble.

I notice that God is on both sides in this war; thus history repeats itself. But I am the only person who has noticed this; everybody here thinks He is playing the game for this side, & for this side only.

Clemens wrote one article for anonymous publication in the *Times*. But when the manuscript was ready to mail—in an envelope stamped and addressed to Moberly Bell—he reconsidered and withheld it. It still lies in the envelope with the accompanying letter, which says:

Don't give me away, whether you print it or not. But I think you ought to print it and get up a squabble, for the weather is just suitable.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CCIX

PLASMON, AND A NEW MAGAZINE

CLEMENS was not wholly wedded to osteopathy. The financial interest which he had taken in the new milk albumen, "a food for invalids," tended to divide his faith and make him uncertain as to which was to be the chief panacea for all ills—osteopathy or plasmon.

MacAlister, who was deeply interested in the plasmon fortunes, was anxious to get the product adopted by the army. He believed, if he could get an interview with the Medical Director-General, he could convince him of its merits. Discussing the matter with Clemens, the latter said:

"MacAlister, you are going at it from the wrong end. You can't go direct to that man, a perfect stranger, and convince him of anything. Who is his nearest friend?"

MacAlister knew of a man on terms of social intimacy with the official.

Clemens said, "That is the man to speak to the Director-General."

"But I don't know him, either," said MacAlister.

"Very good. Do you know any one who does know him?"

"Yes, I know *his* most intimate friend."

"Then he is the man for you to approach. Convince him that plasmon is what the army needs, that the military hospitals are suffering for it. Let him understand that what you want is to get this to the Director-General, and in due time it *will* get to him in the proper way. You'll see."

This proved to be a true prophecy. It was only a little while until the British army had experimented with plasmon and adopted it. MacAlister reported the success of the scheme to Clemens, and out of it grew the story entitled, "Two Little Tales," published in November of the following year (1901) in the *Century Magazine*. Perhaps the reader will remember that in the "Two Little Tales" the Emperor is very ill and the lowest of all his subjects knows a certain remedy, but he cannot seek the Emperor direct, so he wisely approaches him through a series of progressive stages—finally reaching and curing his stricken Majesty.

Clemens had the courage of his investments. He adopted plasmon as his own daily food, and induced various members of the family to take it in its more palatable forms, one of these being a preparation of chocolate. He kept the reading-table by his bed well stocked with a variety of the products and invited various callers to try a complimentary sample lot. It was really an excellent and harmless diet, and both the company and its patients would seem to have prospered—perhaps are prospering still.

There was another business opportunity came along just at this time. S. S. McClure was in England with a proposition for starting a new magazine whose complexion was to be peculiarly American, with Mark Twain as its editor. The magazine was to be called *The Universal*, and by the proposition Clemens was to receive a tenth interest in it for his first year's work, and an added twentieth interest for each of the two succeeding years, with a guarantee that his shares should not earn him less than five thousand dollars the first year, with a proportionate increase as his holdings grew.

The scheme appealed to Clemens, it being understood in the beginning that he was to give very little time to the work, with the privilege of doing it at his home, wherever

that might happen to be. He wrote of the matter to Mr. Rogers, explaining in detail, and Rogers replied, approving the plan. Mr. Rogers said he knew that he [Rogers] would have to do most of the work in editing the magazine, and further added:

One thing I shall insist upon, however, if I have anything to do with the matter, and it is this: that when you have made up your mind on the subject you will stick to it. I have not found in your composition that element of stubbornness which is a constant source of embarrassment to me in all friendly and social ways, but which, when applied to certain lines of business, brings in the dollar and fifty-cent pieces. If you accept the position, of course that means that you have to come to this country. If you do, the yachting will be a success.

There was considerable correspondence with McClure over the new periodical. In one letter Clemens set forth his general views of the matter quite clearly:

Let us not deceive any one, nor allow any one to deceive himself, if it can be prevented. *This is not to be a comic magazine.* It is to be simply a good, clean, wholesome collection of well-written & enticing literary products, like the other magazines of its class; not setting itself to please but one of man's moods, but all of them. It will not play but one kind of music, but all kinds. I should not be able to edit a comic periodical satisfactorily, for lack of interest in the work. I value humor highly, & am constitutionally fond of it, but I should not like it as a steady diet. For its own best interests, humor should take its outings in grave company; its cheerful dress gets heightened color from the proximity of sober hues. For me to edit a comic magazine would be an incongruity & out of character, for of the twenty-three books which I have written eighteen do not deal in humor as their chiefest feature, but are half & half admixtures of fun & seriousness. I think I have seldom deliberately set out to be humorous, but have nearly always allowed the humor to drop in or stay out, according to its fancy. Although I have many times been asked to write something

humorous for an editor or a publisher I have had wisdom enough to decline; a person could hardly be humorous with the other man watching him like that. I have never tried to write a humorous lecture; I have only tried to write serious ones—it is the only way not to succeed.

I shall write for this magazine every time the spirit moves me; but I look for my largest entertainment in editing. I have been edited by all kinds of people for more than thirty-eight years; there has always been somebody in authority over my manuscript & privileged to improve it; this has fatigued me a good deal, & I have often longed to move up from the dock to the bench & rest myself and fatigue others. My opportunity is come, but I hope I shall not abuse it overmuch. I mean to do my best to make a good magazine; I mean to do my whole duty, & not shirk any part of it. There are plenty of distinguished artists, novelists, poets, story-tellers, philosophers, scientists, explorers, fighters, hunters, followers of the sea, & seekers of adventure; & with these to do the hard & the valuable part of the work with the pen & the pencil it will be comfort & joy to me to walk the quarter-deck & superintend.

Meanwhile McClure's enthusiasm had had time to adjust itself to certain existing facts. Something more than a month later he wrote from America at considerable length, setting forth the various editorial duties and laying stress upon the feature of intimate physical contact with the magazine. He went into the matter of the printing schedule, the various kinds of paper used, the advertising pages, illustrations—into all the detail, indeed, which a practical managing editor must compass in his daily rounds. It was pretty evident that Clemens would not be able to go sailing about on Mr. Rogers's yacht or live at will in London or New York or Vienna or Elmira, but that he would be more or less harnessed to a revolving chair at an editorial desk, the thing which of all fates he would be most likely to dread. The scheme appears to have died there—the correspondence to have closed.

Somewhat of the inducement in the McClure scheme had been the thought in Clemens's mind that it would bring him back to America. In a letter to Mr. Rogers (January 8, 1900) he said, "I am tired to death of this everlasting exile." Mrs. Clemens often wrote that he was restlessly impatient to return. They were, in fact, constantly discussing the practicability of returning to their own country now and opening the Hartford home. Clemens was ready to do that or to fall in with any plan that would bring him across the water and settle him somewhere permanently. He was tired of the wandering life they had been leading. Besides the long trip of '95 and '96 they had moved two or three times a year regularly since leaving Hartford, nine years before. It seemed to him that they were always packing and unpacking.

"The poor man is willing to live anywhere if we will only let him 'stay put,'" wrote Mrs. Clemens, but he did want to settle in his own land. Mrs. Clemens, too, was weary with wandering, but the Hartford home no longer held any attraction for her. There had been a time when her every letter dwelt on their hope of returning to it. Now the thought filled her with dread. To her sister she wrote:

> Do you think we can live through the first going into the house in Hartford? I feel if we had gotten through the first three months all might be well, but consider the first night.

The thought of the responsibility of that great house —the taking up again of the old life—disheartened her, too. She had added years and she had not gained in health or strength.

> When I was comparatively young I found the burden of that house very great. I don't think I was ever fitted for housekeeping. I dislike the practical part of it so much. I hate it when the servants don't do well, and I hate the correcting them.

Yet no one ever had better discipline in her domestic affairs or ever commanded more devoted service. Her strength of character and the proportions of her achievement show large when we consider this confession.

They planned to return in the spring, but postponed the date for sailing. Jean was still under Kellgren's treatment, and, though a cure had been promised her, progress was discouragingly slow. They began to look about for summer quarters in or near London.

CCX

LONDON SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ALL this time Clemens had been tossing on the London social tide. There was a call for him everywhere. No distinguished visitor of whatever profession or rank but must meet Mark Twain. The King of Sweden was among his royal conquests of that season.

He was more happy with men of his own kind. He was often with Moberly Bell, of the *Times;* E. A. Abbey, the painter; Sir Henry Lucy, of *Punch* (Toby, M.P.); James Bryce, and Herbert Gladstone; and there were a number of brilliant Irishmen who were his special delight. Once with Mrs. Clemens he dined with the author of his old favorite, *European Morals*, William E. H. Lecky. Lady Gregory was there and Sir Dennis Fitz-Patrick, who had been Lieut.-Governor of the Punjab when they were in India, and a number of other Irish ladies and gentlemen. It was a memorable evening. To Twichell Clemens wrote:

Joe, do you know the Irish gentleman & the Irish lady, the Scotch gentleman & the Scotch lady? These are darlings, every one. Night before last it was all Irish—24. One would have to travel far to match their ease & sociability & animation & sparkle & absence of shyness & self-consciousness. It was American in these fine qualities. This was at Mr. Lecky's. He is Irish, you know. Last night it was Irish again, at Lady Gregory's. Lord Roberts is Irish, & Sir William Butler, & Kitchener, I think, & a disproportion of the other prominent generals are of Irish & Scotch breed—keeping up the traditions of Wellington & Sir Colin Campbell, of the Mutiny. You will

have noticed that in S. A., as in the Mutiny, it is usually the Irish & Scotch that are placed in the forefront of the battle. . . . Sir William Butler said, "the Celt is the spearhead of the British lance."

He mentions the news from the African war, which had been favorable to England, and what a change had come over everything in consequence. The dinner-parties had been lodges of sorrow and depressing. Now everybody was smiling again. In a note-book entry of this time he wrote:

Relief of Mafeking (May 18, 1900). The news came at 9.17 P.M. Before 10 all London was in the streets, gone mad with joy. By then the news was all over the American continent.

Clemens had been talking copyright a good deal in London, and introducing it into his speeches. Finally, one day he was summoned before a committee of the House of Lords to explain his views. His old idea that the product of a man's brain is his property in perpetuity and not for any term of years had not changed, and they permitted him to dilate on this (to them) curious doctrine. The committee consisted of Lords Monkswell, Knutsford, Avebury, Farrar, and Thwing. When they asked for his views he said:

"In my opinion the copyright laws of England and America need only the removal of the forty-two-year limit and the return to perpetual copyright to be perfect. I consider that at least one of the reasons advanced in justification of limited copyright is fallacious — namely, the one which makes a distinction between an author's property and real estate, and pretends that the two are not created, produced, or acquired in the same way, thus warranting a different treatment of the two by law."

Continuing, he dwelt on the ancient doctrine that there

was no property in an idea, showing how the far greater proportion of all property consisted of nothing more than elaborated ideas—the steamship, locomotive, telephone, the vast buildings in the world, how all of these had been constructed upon a basic idea precisely as a book is constructed, and were property only as a book is property, and therefore rightly subject to the same laws. He was carefully and searchingly examined by that shrewd committee. He kept them entertained and interested and left them in good-nature, even if not entirely converted. The papers printed his remarks, and London found them amusing.

A few days after the copyright session, Clemens, responding to the toast, "Literature," at the Royal Literary Fund Banquet, made London laugh again, and early in June he was at the Savoy Hotel welcoming Sir Henry Irving back to England after one of his successful American tours.

On the Fourth of July (1900) Clemens dined with the Lord Chief-Justice, and later attended an American banquet at the Hotel Cecil. He arrived late, when a number of the guests were already going. They insisted, however, that he make a speech, which he did, and considered the evening ended. It was not quite over. A sequel to his "Luck" story, published nine years before, suddenly developed.

To go back a little, the reader may recall that "Luck" was a story which Twichell had told him as being supposedly true. The hero of it was a military officer who had risen to the highest rank through what at least seemed to be sheer luck, including a number of fortunate blunders. Clemens thought the story improbable, but wrote it and laid it away for several years, offering it at last in the general house-cleaning which took place after the first collapse of the machine. It was published in *Harper's Magazine* for August, 1891, and something less than a year later, in Rome, an English gentleman—a new acquaintance—said to him:

"Mr. Clemens, shall you go to England?"

"Very likely."

"Shall you take your tomahawk with you?"

"Why—yes, if it shall seem best."

"Well, it will. Be advised. Take it with you."

"Why?"

"Because of that sketch of yours entitled 'Luck.' That sketch is current in England, and you will surely need your tomahawk."

"What makes you think so?"

"I think so because the hero of the sketch will naturally want your scalp, and will probably apply for it. Be advised. Take your tomahawk along."

"Why, even with it I sha'n't stand any chance, because I sha'n't know him when he applies, and he will have my scalp before I know what his errand is."

"Come, do you mean to say that you don't know who the hero of that sketch is?"

"Indeed I haven't any idea who the hero of the sketch is. Who is it?"

His informant hesitated a moment, then named a name of world-wide military significance.

As Mark Twain finished his Fourth of July speech at the Cecil and started to sit down a splendidly uniformed and decorated personage at his side said:

"Mr. Clemens, I have been wanting to know you a long time," and he was looking down into the face of the hero of "Luck."

"I was caught unprepared," he said in his notes of it. "I didn't sit down—I fell down. I didn't have my tomahawk, and I didn't know what would happen. But he was composed, and pretty soon I got composed and we had a good, friendly time. If he had ever heard of that sketch of mine he did not manifest it in any way, and at twelve, midnight, I took my scalp home intact."

CCXI

DOLLIS HILL AND HOME

IT was early in July, 1900, that they removed to Dollis Hill House, a beautiful old residence surrounded by trees on a peaceful hilltop, just outside of London. It was literally within a stone's-throw of the city limits, yet it was quite rural, for the city had not overgrown it then, and it retained all its pastoral features — a pond with lily-pads, the spreading oaks, the wide spaces of grassy lawn. Gladstone, an intimate friend of the owner, had made it a favorite retreat at one period of his life, and the place to-day is converted into a public garden called Gladstone Park. The old English diplomat used to drive out and sit in the shade of the trees and read and talk and translate Homer, and pace the lawn as he planned diplomacy, and, in effect, govern the English empire from that retired spot.

Clemens, in some memoranda made at the moment, doubts if Gladstone was always at peace in his mind in this retirement.

"Was he always really tranquil within," he says, "or was he only externally so—for effect? We cannot know; we only know that his rustic bench under his favorite oak has no bark on its arms. Facts like this speak louder than words."

The red-brick residential wave of London was still some distance away in 1900. Clemens says:

> The rolling sea of green grass still stretches away on every hand, splotches with shadows of spreading oaks in whose

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black coolness flocks of sheep lie peacefully dreaming. Dreaming of what? That they are in London, the metropolis of the world, Post-office District, N. W.? Indeed no. They are not aware of it. I am aware of it, but that is all. It is not possible to realize it. For there is no suggestion of city here; it is country, pure & simple, & as still & reposeful as is the bottom of the sea.

They all loved Dollis Hill. Mrs. Clemens wrote as if she would like to remain forever in that secluded spot.

It is simply divinely beautiful & peaceful; . . . the great old trees are beyond everything. I believe nowhere in the world do you find such trees as in England. . . . Jean has a hammock swung between two such great trees, & on the other side of a little pond, which is *full* of white & yellow pond-lilies, there is tall grass & trees & Clara & Jean go there in the afternoons, spread down a rug on the grass in the shade & read & sleep.

They all spent most of their time outdoors at Dollis Hill under those spreading trees.

Clemens to Twichell in midsummer wrote:

I am the only person who is ever in the house in the daytime, but I am working & deep in the luxury of it. But there is one tremendous defect. Livy is all so enchanted with the place & so in love with it that she doesn't know how she is going to tear herself away from it.

Much company came to them at Dollis Hill. Friends drove out from London, and friends from America came often among them—the Sages, Prof. Willard Fiske, and Brander Matthews with his family. Such callers were served with tea and refreshment on the lawn, and lingered, talking and talking, while the sun got lower and the shadows lengthened, reluctant to leave that idyllic spot.

"Dollis Hill comes nearer to being a paradise than any other home I ever occupied," he wrote when the summer was about over.

But there was still a greater attraction than Dollis Hill. Toward the end of summer they willingly left that paradise, for they had decided at last to make that home-returning voyage which had invited them so long. They were all eager enough to go—Clemens more eager than the rest, though he felt a certain sadness, too, in leaving the tranquil spot which in a brief summer they had so learned to love.

Writing to W. H. Helm, a London newspaper man who had spent pleasant hours with him chatting in the shade, he said:

> . . . The packing & fussing & arranging have begun, for the removal to America &, by consequence, the peace of life is marred & its contents & satisfactions are departing. There is not much choice between a removal & a funeral; in fact, a removal is a funeral, substantially, & I am tired of attending them.

They closed Dollis Hill, spent a few days at Brown's Hotel, and sailed for America on the *Minnehaha*, October 6, 1900, bidding, as Clemens believed, and hoped, a permanent good-by to foreign travel. They reached New York on the 15th, triumphantly welcomed after their long nine years of wandering. How glad Mark Twain was to get home may be judged from his remark to one of the many reporters who greeted him.

"If I ever get ashore I am going to break both of my legs so I can't get away again."

CCXII

THE RETURN OF THE CONQUEROR

IT would be hard to exaggerate the stir which the newspapers and the public generally made over the homecoming of Mark Twain. He had left America staggering under heavy obligation and set out on a pilgrimage of redemption. At the moment when this Mecca was in view a great sorrow had befallen him and stirred a world-wide and soul-deep tide of human sympathy. Then there had followed such ovation as has seldom been conferred upon a private citizen, and now approaching old age, still in the fullness of his mental vigor, he had returned to his native soil with the prestige of these honors upon him and the vast added glory of having made his financial fight single-handed—and won.

He was heralded literally as a conquering hero. Every paper in the land had an editorial telling the story of his debts, his sorrow, and his triumphs.

"He had behaved like Walter Scott," says Howells, "as millions rejoiced to know who had not known how Walter Scott had behaved till they knew it was like Clemens."

Howells acknowledges that he had some doubts as to the permanency of the vast acclaim of the American public, remembering, or perhaps assuming, a national fickleness. Says Howells:

> He had hitherto been more intelligently accepted or more largely imagined in Europe, and I suppose it was my sense of this that inspired the stupidity of my saying to him when we

came to consider "the state of polite learning" among us, "You mustn't expect people to keep it up here as they do in England." But it appeared that his countrymen were only wanting the chance, and they kept it up in honor of him past all precedent.

Clemens went to the Earlington Hotel and began search for a furnished house in New York. They would not return to Hartford—at least not yet. The associations there were still too sad, and they immediately became more so. Five days after Mark Twain's return to America, his old friend and co-worker, Charles Dudley Warner, died. Clemens went to Hartford to act as a pall-bearer and while there looked into the old home. To Sylvester Baxter, of Boston, who had been present, he wrote a few days later:

> It was a great pleasure to me to renew the other days with you, & there was a pathetic pleasure in seeing Hartford & the house again; but I realized that if we ever enter the house again to live our hearts will break. I am not sure that we shall ever be strong enough to endure that strain.

Even if the surroundings had been less sorrowful it is not likely that Clemens would have returned to Hartford at this time. He had become a world-character, a dweller in capitals. Everywhere he moved a world revolved about him. Such a figure in Germany would live naturally in Berlin; in England, London; in France, Paris; in Austria, Vienna; in America his headquarters could only be New York.

Clemens empowered certain of his friends to find a home for him, and Mr. Frank N. Doubleday discovered an attractive and handsomely furnished residence at 14 West Tenth Street, which was promptly approved. Doubleday, who was going to Boston, left orders with the agent to draw the lease and take it up to the new tenant for signature. To Clemens he said:

"The house is as good as yours. All you've got to do is to sign the lease. You can consider it all settled."

When Doubleday returned from Boston a few days later the agent called on him and complained that he couldn't find Mark Twain anywhere. It was reported at his hotel that he had gone and left no address. Doubleday was mystified; then, reflecting, he had an inspiration. He walked over to 14 West Tenth Street and found what he had suspected—Mark Twain had moved in. He had convinced the caretaker that everything was all right and he was quite at home. Doubleday said:

"Why, you haven't executed the lease yet."

"No," said Clemens, "but you said the house was as good as mine," to which Doubleday agreed, but suggested that they go up to the real-estate office and give the agent notice that he was in possession of the premises.

Doubleday's troubles were not quite over, however. Clemens began to find defects in his new home and assumed to hold Doubleday responsible for them. He sent a daily postal card complaining of the windows, furnace, the range, the water—whatever he thought might lend interest to Doubleday's life. As a matter of fact, he was pleased with the place. To MacAlister he wrote:

> We were very lucky to get this big house furnished. There was not another one in town procurable that would answer us, but this one is all right—space enough in it for several families, the rooms all old-fashioned, great size.

The house at 14 West Tenth Street became suddenly one of the most conspicuous residences in New York. The papers immediately made its appearance familiar. Many people passed down that usually quiet street, stopping to observe or point out where Mark Twain lived. There was a constant procession of callers of every kind. Many were friends, old and new, but there was a multitude of strangers. Hundreds came merely to

express their appreciation of his work, hoping for a personal word or a hand-shake or an autograph; but there were other hundreds who came with this thing and that thing—axes to grind—and there were newspaper reporters to ask his opinion on politics, or polygamy, or woman's suffrage; on heaven and hell and happiness; on the latest novel; on the war in Africa, the troubles in China; on anything under the sun, important or unimportant, interesting or inane, concerning which one might possibly hold an opinion. He was unfailing "copy" if they could but get a word with him. Anything that he might choose to say upon any subject whatever was seized upon and magnified and printed with head-lines. Sometimes opinions were invented for him. If he let fall a few words they were multiplied into a column interview.

"That reporter worked a miracle equal to the loaves and fishes," he said of one such performance.

Many men would have become annoyed and irritable as these things continued; but Mark Twain was greater than that. Eventually he employed a secretary to stand between him and the wash of the tide, as a sort of breakwater; but he seldom lost his temper no matter what was the request which was laid before him, for he recognized underneath it the great tribute of a great nation.

Of course his literary valuation would be affected by the noise of the general applause. Magazines and syndicates besought him for manuscripts. He was offered fifty cents and even a dollar a word for whatever he might give them. He felt a child-like gratification in these evidences of his market advancement, but he was not demoralized by them. He confined his work to a few magazines, and in November concluded an arrangement with the new management of Harper & Brothers, by which that firm was to have the exclusive serial privilege of whatever he might write at a fixed rate of twenty cents per

word—a rate increased to thirty cents by a later contract, which also provided a twenty per cent. royalty for the publication of his books.

The United States, as a nation, does not confer any special honors upon private citizens. We do not have decorations and titles, even though there are times when it seems that such things might be not inappropriately conferred. Certain of the newspapers, more lavish in their enthusiasm than others, were inclined to propose, as one paper phrased it, "Some peculiar recognition—something that should appeal to Samuel L. Clemens, the man, rather than to Mark Twain, the literate. Just what form this recognition should take is doubtful, for the case has no exact precedent."

Perhaps the paper thought that Mark Twain was entitled—as he himself once humorously suggested—to the "thanks of Congress" for having come home alive and out of debt, but it is just as well that nothing of the sort was ever seriously considered. The thanks of the public at large contained more substance, and was a tribute much more to his mind. The paper above quoted ended by suggesting a very large dinner and memorial of welcome as being more in keeping with the republican idea and the American expression of good-will.

But this was an unneeded suggestion. If he had eaten all the dinners proposed he would not have lived to enjoy his public honors a month. As it was, he accepted many more dinners than he could eat, and presently fell into the habit of arriving when the banqueting was about over and the after-dinner speaking about to begin. Even so the strain told on him.

"His friends saw that he was wearing himself out," says Howells, and perhaps this was true, for he grew thin and pale and contracted a hacking cough. He did not spare himself as often as he should have done. Once to Richard Watson Gilder he sent this line of regrets:

In bed with a chest cold and other company—Wednesday.

DEAR GILDER,—I can't. If I were a well man I could explain with this pencil, but in the cir——ces I will leave it all to your imagination.

Was it Grady who killed himself trying to do all the dining and speeching?

No, old man, no, no! Ever yours, MARK.

He became again the guest of honor at the Lotos Club, which had dined him so lavishly seven years before, just previous to his financial collapse. That former dinner had been a distinguished occasion, but never before had the Lotos Club been so brimming with eager hospitality as on the second great occasion. In closing his introductory speech President Frank Lawrence said, "We hail him as one who has borne great burdens with manliness and courage, who has emerged from great struggles victorious," and the assembled diners roared out their applause. Clemens in his reply said:

Your president has referred to certain burdens which I was weighted with. I am glad he did, as it gives me an opportunity which I wanted—to speak of those debts. You all knew what he meant when he referred to it, & of the poor bankrupt firm of C. L. Webster & Co. No one has said a word about those creditors. There were ninety-six creditors in all, & not by a finger's weight did ninety-five out of the ninety-six add to the burden of that time. They treated me well; they treated me handsomely. I never knew I owed them anything; not a sign came from them.

It was like him to make that public acknowledgment. He could not let an unfair impression remain that any man or any set of men had laid an unnecessary burden upon him—his sense of justice would not consent to it. He also spoke on that occasion of certain national changes.

How many things have happened in the seven years I have been away from home! We have fought a righteous war, and a righteous war is a rare thing in history. We have turned

aside from our own comfort and seen to it that freedom should exist, not only within our own gates, but in our own neighborhood. We have set Cuba free and placed her among the galaxy of free nations of the world. We started out to set those poor Filipinos free, but why that righteous plan miscarried perhaps I shall never know. We have also been making a creditable showing in China, and that is more than all the other powers can say. The "Yellow Terror" is threatening the world, but no matter what happens the United States says that it has had no part in it.

Since I have been away we have been nursing free silver. We have watched by its cradle, we have done our best to raise that child, but every time it seemed to be getting along nicely along came some pestiferous Republican and gave it the measles or something. I fear we will *never* raise that child.

We've done more than that. We elected a President four years ago. We've found fault and criticized him, and here a day or two ago we go and elect him for another four years, with votes enough to spare to do it over again.

One club followed another in honoring Mark Twain—the Aldine, the St. Nicholas, the Press clubs, and other associations and societies. His old friends were at these dinners—Howells, Aldrich, Depew, Rogers, ex-Speaker Reed—and they praised him and gibed him to his and their hearts' content.

It was a political year, and he generally had something to say on matters municipal, national, or international; and he spoke out more and more freely, as with each opportunity he warmed more righteously to his subject.

At the dinner given to him by the St. Nicholas Club he said, with deep irony:

Gentlemen, you have here the best municipal government in the world, and the most fragrant and the purest. The very angels of heaven envy you and wish they had a government like it up there. You got it by your noble fidelity to civic duty; by the stern and ever watchful exercise of the great powers

lodged in you as lovers and guardians of your city; by your manly refusal to sit inert when base men would have invaded her high places and possessed them; by your instant retaliation when any insult was offered you in her person, or any assault was made upon her fair fame. It is you who have made this government what it is, it is you who have made it the envy and despair of the other capitals of the world—and God bless you for it, gentlemen, God bless you! And when you get to heaven at last they'll say with joy, "Oh, there they come, the representatives of the perfectest citizenship in the universe—show them the archangel's box and turn on the limelight!"

Those hearers who in former years had been indifferent to Mark Twain's more serious purpose began to realize that, whatever he may have been formerly, he was by no means now a mere fun-maker, but a man of deep and grave convictions, able to give them the fullest and most forcible expression. He still might make them laugh, but he also made them think, and he stirred them to a truer gospel of patriotism. He did not preach a patriotism that meant a boisterous cheering of the Stars and Stripes right or wrong, but a patriotism that proposed to keep the Stars and Stripes clean and worth shouting for. In an article, perhaps it was a speech, begun at this time he wrote:

We teach the boys to atrophy their independence. We teach them to take their patriotism at second-hand; to shout with the largest crowd without examining into the right or wrong of the matter—exactly as boys under monarchies are taught and have always been taught. We teach them to regard as traitors, and hold in aversion and contempt, such as do not shout with the crowd, & so here in our democracy we are cheering a thing which of all things is most foreign to it & out of place—the delivery of our political conscience into somebody else's keeping. This is patriotism on the Russian plan.

Howells tells of discussing these vital matters with him in "an upper room," looking south over a quiet, open space of back yards where," he says, "we fought our

battles in behalf of the Filipinos and Boers, and he carried on his campaign against the missionaries in China."

Howells at the time expressed an amused fear that Mark Twain's countrymen, who in former years had expected him to be merely a humorist, should now, in the light of his wider acceptance abroad, demand that he be mainly serious.

But the American people were quite ready to accept him in any of his phases, fully realizing that whatever his philosophy or doctrine it would have somewhat of the humorous form, and whatever his humor, there would somewhere be wisdom in it. He had in reality changed little; for a generation he had thought the sort of things which he now, with advanced years and a different audience, felt warranted in uttering openly. The man who in '64 had written against corruption in San Francisco, who a few years later had defended the emigrant Chinese against persecution, who at the meetings of the Monday Evening Club had denounced hypocrisy in politics, morals, and national issues, did not need to change to be able to speak out against similar abuses now. And a newer generation was willing to herald Mark Twain as a sage as well as a humorist, and on occasion to quite overlook the absence of the cap and bells.

CCXIII

MARK TWAIN—GENERAL SPOKESMAN

CLEMENS did not confine his speeches altogether to matters of reform. At a dinner given by the Nineteenth Century Club in November, 1900, he spoke on the "Disappearance of Literature," and at the close of the discussion of that subject, referring to Milton and Scott, he said:

Professor Winchester also said something about there being no modern epics like "Paradise Lost." I guess he's right. He talked as if he was pretty familiar with that piece of literary work, and nobody would suppose that he never had read it. I don't believe any of you have ever read "Paradise Lost," and you don't want to. That's something that you just want to take on trust. It's a classic, just as Professor Winchester says, and it meets his definition of a classic—something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.

Professor Trent also had a good deal to say about the disappearance of literature. He said that Scott would outlive all his critics. I guess that's true. That fact of the business is you've got to be one of two ages to appreciate Scott. When you're eighteen you can read *Ivanhoe*, and you want to wait until you're ninety to read some of the rest. It takes a pretty well-regulated abstemious critic to live ninety years.

But a few days later he was back again in the forefront of reform, preaching at the Berkeley Lyceum against foreign occupation in China. It was there that he declared himself a Boxer.

Why should not China be free from the foreigners, who are only making trouble on her soil? If they would only all go home what a pleasant place China would be for the Chinese! We do not allow Chinamen to come here, and I say, in all seriousness, that it would be a graceful thing to let China decide who shall go there.

China never wanted foreigners any more than foreigners wanted Chinamen, and on this question I am with the Boxers every time. The Boxer is a patriot. He loves his country better than he does the countries of other people. I wish him success. We drive the Chinaman out of our country; the Boxer believes in driving us out of his country. I am a Boxer, too, on those terms.

Introducing Winston Churchill, of England, at a dinner some weeks later, he explained how generous England and America had been in not requiring fancy rates for "extinguished missionaries" in China as Germany had done. Germany had required territory and cash, he said, in payment for her missionaries, while the United States and England had been willing to settle for produce—firecrackers and tea.

The Churchill introduction would seem to have been his last speech for the year 1900, and he expected it, with one exception, to be the last for a long time. He realized that he was tired and that the strain upon him made any other sort of work out of the question. Writing to MacAlister at the end of the year, he said, "I seem to have made many speeches, but it is not so. It is not more than ten, I think." Still, a respectable number in the space of two months, considering that each was carefully written and committed to memory, and all amid crushing social pressure. Again to MacAlister:

I declined 7 banquets yesterday (which is double the daily average) & answered 29 letters. I have slaved at my mail every day since we arrived in mid-October, but Jean is learning to typewrite & presently I'll dictate & thereby save some scraps of time.

He added that after January 4th he did not intend to speak again for a year—that he would not speak then only that the matter concerned the reform of city government.

The occasion of January 4, 1901, was a rather important one. It was a meeting of the City Club, then engaged in the crusade for municipal reform. Wheeler H. Peckham presided, and Bishop Potter made the opening address. It all seems like ancient history now, and perhaps is not very vital any more; but the movement was making a great stir then, and Mark Twain's declaration that he believed forty-nine men out of fifty were honest, and that the forty-nine only needed to organize to disqualify the fiftieth man (always organized for crime), was quoted as a sort of slogan for reform.

Clemens was not permitted to keep his resolution that he wouldn't speak again that year. He had become a sort of general spokesman on public matters, and demands were made upon him which could not be denied. He declined a Yale alumni dinner, but he could not refuse to preside at the Lincoln Birthday celebration at Carnegie Hall, February 11th, where he must introduce Watterson as the speaker of the evening.

"Think of it!" he wrote Twichell. "Two old rebels functioning there: I as president and Watterson as orator of the day! Things have changed somewhat in these forty years, thank God!"

The Watterson introduction is one of the choicest of Mark Twain's speeches—a pure and perfect example of simple eloquence, worthy of the occasion which gave it utterance, worthy in spite of its playful paragraphs (or even because of them, for Lincoln would have loved them), to become the matrix of that imperishable Gettysburg phrase with which he makes his climax. He opened by dwelling for a moment on Colonel Watterson as a soldier, journalist, orator, statesman, and patriot; then he said:

It is a curious circumstance that without collusion of any kind, but merely in obedience to a strange and pleasant and dramatic freak of destiny, he and I, kinsmen by blood [1]—for we are that—and one-time rebels—for we were that—should be chosen out of a million surviving quondam rebels to come here and bare our heads in reverence and love of that noble soul whom 40 years ago we tried with all our hearts and all our strength to defeat and dispossess—Abraham Lincoln! Is the Rebellion ended and forgotten? Are the Blue and the Gray one to-day? By authority of this sign we may answer yes; there was a Rebellion—that incident is closed.

I was born and reared in a slave State, my father was a slave-owner; and in the Civil War I was a second lieutenant in the Confederate service. For a while. This second cousin of mine, Colonel Watterson, the orator of this present occasion, was born and reared in a slave State, was a colonel in the Confederate service, and rendered me such assistance as he could in my self-appointed great task of annihilating the Federal armies and breaking up the Union. I laid my plans with wisdom and foresight, and if Colonel Watterson had obeyed my orders I should have succeeded in my giant undertaking. It was my intention to drive General Grant into the Pacific—if I could get transportation—and I told Colonel Watterson to surround the Eastern armies and wait till I came. But he was insubordinate, and stood upon a punctilio of military etiquette; he refused to take orders from a second lieutenant—and the Union was saved. This is the first time that this secret has been revealed. Until now no one outside the family has known the facts. But there they stand: Watterson saved the Union. Yet to this day that man gets no pension. Those were great days, splendid days. What an uprising it was! For the hearts of the whole nation, North and South, were in the war. We of the South were not ashamed; for, like the men of the North, we were fighting for flags we loved; and when men fight for these things, and under these convictions, with nothing sordid to tarnish their cause, that cause is holy, the blood spilt for it is sacred, the life that is laid down for it is consecrated. To-day we no longer regret

[1] Colonel Watterson's forebears had intermarried with the Lamptons.

the result, to-day we are glad it came out as it did, but we are not ashamed that we did our endeavor; we did our bravest best, against despairing odds, for the cause which was precious to us and which our consciences approved; and we are proud—and you are proud—the kindred blood in your veins answers when I say it—you are proud of the record we made in those mighty collisions in the fields.

What an uprising it was! We did not have to supplicate for soldiers on either side. "We are coming, Father Abraham, three hundred thousand strong!" That was the music North and South. The very choicest young blood and brawn and brain rose up from Maine to the Gulf and flocked to the standards—just as men always do when in their eyes their cause is great and fine and their hearts are in it; just as men flocked to the Crusades, sacrificing all they possessed to the cause, and entering cheerfully upon hardships which we cannot even imagine in this age, and upon toilsome and wasting journeys which in our time would be the equivalent of circumnavigating the globe five times over.

North and South we put our hearts into that colossal struggle, and out of it came the blessed fulfilment of the prophecy of the immortal Gettysburg speech which said: "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that a government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

We are here to honor the birthday of the greatest citizen, and the noblest and the best, after Washington, that this land or any other has yet produced. The old wounds are healed, you and we are brothers again; you testify it by honoring two of us, once soldiers of the Lost Cause, and foes of your great and good leader—with the privilege of assisting here; and we testify it by laying our honest homage at the feet of Abraham Lincoln, and in forgetting that you of the North and we of the South were ever enemies, and remembering only that we are now indistinguishably fused together and nameable by one common great name—Americans!

CCXIV

MARK TWAIN AND THE MISSIONARIES

MARK TWAIN had really begun his crusade for reform soon after his arrival in America in a practical hand-to-hand manner. His housekeeper, Katie Leary, one night employed a cabman to drive her from the Grand Central Station to the house at 14 West Tenth Street. No contract had been made as to price, and when she arrived there the cabman's extortionate charge was refused. He persisted in it, and she sent into the house for her employer. Of all men, Mark Twain was the last one to countenance an extortion. He reasoned with the man kindly enough at first; when the driver at last became abusive Clemens demanded his number, which was at first refused. In the end he paid the legal fare, and in the morning entered a formal complaint, something altogether unexpected, for the American public is accustomed to suffering almost any sort of imposition to avoid trouble and publicity.

In some notes which Clemens had made in London four years earlier he wrote:

> If you call a policeman to settle the dispute you can depend on one thing—he will decide it against you every time. And so will the New York policeman. In London if you carry your case into court the man that is entitled to win it will win it. In New York—but no one carries a cab case into court there. It is my impression that it is now more than thirty years since any one has carried a cab case into court there.

Nevertheless, he was promptly on hand when the case was called to sustain the charge and to read the cab-drivers' union and the public in general a lesson in good-citizenship. At the end of the hearing, to a representative of the union he said:

"This is not a matter of sentiment, my dear sir. It is simply practical business. You cannot imagine that I am making money wasting an hour or two of my time prosecuting a case in which I can have no personal interest whatever. I am doing this just as any citizen should do. He has no choice. He has a distinct duty. He is a non-classified policeman. Every citizen is a policeman, and it is his duty to assist the police and the magistracy in every way he can, and give his time, if necessary, to do so. Here is a man who is a perfectly natural product of an infamous system in this city—a charge upon the lax patriotism in this city of New York where this thing can exist. You have encouraged him in every way you know how to overcharge. He is not the criminal here at all. The criminal is the citizen of New York and the absence of patriotism. I am not here to avenge myself on him. I have no quarrel with him. My quarrel is with the citizens of New York, who have encouraged him, and who created him by encouraging him to overcharge in this way."

The driver's license was suspended. The case made a stir in the newspapers, and it is not likely that any one incident ever contributed more to cab-driving morals in New York City.

But Clemens had larger matters than this in prospect. His many speeches on municipal and national abuses he felt were more or less ephemeral. He proposed now to write himself down more substantially and for a wider hearing. The human race was behaving very badly: unspeakable corruption was rampant in the city; the Boers were being oppressed in South Africa; the natives were

being murdered in the Philippines; Leopold of Belgium was massacring and mutilating the blacks in the Congo, and the allied powers, in the cause of Christ, were slaughtering the Chinese. In his letters he had more than once boiled over touching these matters, and for New-Year's Eve, 1900, had written:

A GREETING FROM THE NINETEENTH TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

I bring you the stately nation named Christendom, returning, bedraggled, besmirched, and dishonored, from pirate raids in Kiao-Chou, Manchuria, South Africa, and the Philippines, with her soul full of meanness, her pocket full of boodle, and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies. Give her soap and towel, but hide the looking-glass.[1]

This was a sort of preliminary. Then, restraining himself no longer, he embodied his sentiments in an article for the *North American Review* entitled, "To the Person Sitting in Darkness." There was crying need for some one to speak the right word. He was about the only one who could do it and be certain of a universal audience. He took as his text some Christmas Eve clippings from the New York *Tribune* and *Sun* which he had been saving for this purpose. The *Tribune* clipping said:

Christmas will dawn in the United States over a people full of hope and aspiration and good cheer. Such a condition means contentment and happiness. The carping grumbler who may here and there go forth will find few to listen to him. The majority will wonder what is the matter with him, and pass on.

A *Sun* clipping depicted the "terrible offenses against humanity committed in the name of politics in some of

[1] Prepared for Red Cross Society watch-meeting, which was postponed until March. Clemens recalled his "Greeting" for that reason and for one other, which he expressed thus:

"The list of greeters thus far issued by you contains only vague generalities and one definite name—mine: 'Some kings and queens and Mark Twain.' Now I am not enjoying this sparkling solitude and distinction. It makes me feel like a circus-poster in a graveyard."

the most notorious East Side districts"—the unmissionaried, unpoliced darker New York. The *Sun* declared that they could not be pictured even verbally. But it suggested enough to make the reader shudder at the hideous depths of vice in the sections named. Another clipping from the same paper reported the "Rev. Mr. Ament, of the American Board of Foreign Missions," as having collected indemnities for Boxer damages in China at the rate of three hundred taels for each murder, "full payment for all destroyed property belonging to Christians, and national fines amounting to thirteen times the indemnity." It quoted Mr. Ament as saying that the money so obtained was used for the propagation of the Gospel, and that the amount so collected was moderate when compared with the amount secured by the Catholics, who had demanded, in addition to money, life for life, that is to say, "head for head"—in one district six hundred and eighty heads having been so collected.

The despatch made Mr. Ament say a great deal more than this, but the gist here is enough. Mark Twain, of course, was fiercely stirred. The missionary idea had seldom appealed to him, and coupled with this business of bloodshed, it was less attractive than usual. He printed the clippings in full, one following the other; then he said:

> By happy luck we get all these glad tidings on Christmas Eve —just the time to enable us to celebrate the day with proper gaiety and enthusiasm. Our spirits soar and we find we can even make jokes; taels I win, heads you lose.

He went on to score Ament, to compare the missionary policy in China to that of the Pawnee Indians, and to propose for him a monument—subscriptions to be sent to the American Board. He denounced the national policies in Africa, China, and the Philippines, and showed by the reports and by the private letters of soldiers home, how

cruel and barbarous and fiendish had been the warfare made by those whose avowed purpose was to carry the blessed light of civilization and Gospel "to the benighted native"—how in very truth these priceless blessings had been handed on the point of a bayonet to the "Person Sitting in Darkness."

Mark Twain never wrote anything more scorching, more penetrating in its sarcasm, more fearful in its revelation of injustice and hypocrisy, than his article "To the Person Sitting in Darkness." He put *aquafortis* on all the raw places, and when it was finished he himself doubted the wisdom of printing it. Howells, however, agreed that it should be published, and "it ought to be illustrated by Dan Beard," he added, "with such pictures as he made for the *Yankee in King Arthur's Court*, but you'd better hang yourself afterward."

Meeting Beard a few days later, Clemens mentioned the matter and said:

"So if you make the pictures, you hang with me."

But pictures were not required. It was published in the *North American Review* for February, 1901, as the opening article; after which the cyclone. Two storms moving in opposite directions produce a cyclone, and the storms immediately developed; one all for Mark Twain and his principles, the other all against him. Every paper in England and America commented on it editorially, with bitter denunciations or with eager praise, according to their lights and convictions.

At 14 West Tenth Street letters, newspaper clippings, documents poured in by the bushel—laudations, vituperations, denunciations, vindications; no such tumult ever occurred in a peaceful literary home. It was really as if he had thrown a great missile into the human hive, one-half of which regarded it as a ball of honey and the remainder as a cobblestone. Whatever other effect it may have had, it left no thinking person unawakened.

Clemens reveled in it. W. A. Rogers, in *Harper's Weekly*, caricatured him as Tom Sawyer in a snow fort, assailed by the shower of snowballs, "having the time of his life." Another artist, Fred Lewis, pictured him as Huck Finn with a gun.

The American Board was naturally disturbed. The Ament clipping which Clemens had used had been public property for more than a month—its authenticity never denied; but it was immediately denied now, and the cable kept hot with inquiries.

The Rev. Judson Smith, one of the board, took up the defense of Dr. Ament, declaring him to be one who had suffered for the cause, and asked Mark Twain, whose "brilliant article," he said, "would produce an effect quite beyond the reach of plain argument," not to do an innocent man an injustice. Clemens in the same paper replied that such was not his intent, that Mr. Ament in his report had simply arraigned himself.

Then it suddenly developed that the cable report had "grossly exaggerated" the amount of Mr. Ament's collections. Instead of thirteen times the indemnity it should have read "one and a third times" the indemnity; whereupon, in another open letter, the board demanded retraction and apology. Clemens would not fail to make the apology—at least he would explain. It was precisely the kind of thing that would appeal to him — the delicate moral difference between a demand thirteen times as great as it should be and a demand that was only one and a third times the correct amount. "To My Missionary Critics," in the *North American Review* for April (1901), was his formal and somewhat lengthy reply.

"I have no prejudice against apologies," he wrote. "I trust I shall never withhold one when it is due."

He then proceeded to make out his case categorically. Touching the exaggerated indemnity, he said:

To Dr. Smith the "thirteen-fold-extra" clearly stood for "theft and extortion," and he was right, distinctly right, indisputably right. He manifestly thinks that when it got scaled away down to a mere "one-third" a little thing like that was something other than "theft and extortion." Why, only the board knows!

I will try to explain this difficult problem so that the board can get an idea of it. If a pauper owes me a dollar and I catch him unprotected and make him pay me fourteen dollars thirteen of it is "theft and extortion." If I make him pay only one dollar thirty-three and a third cents the thirty-three and a third cents are "theft and extortion," just the same.

I will put it in another way still simpler. If a man owes me one dog—any kind of a dog, the breed is of no consequence—and I—but let it go; the board would never understand it. It can't understand these involved and difficult things.

He offered some further illustrations, including the "Tale of a King and His Treasure" and another tale entitled "The Watermelons."

I have it now. Many years ago, when I was studying for the gallows, I had a dear comrade, a youth who was not in my line, but still a scrupulously good fellow though devious. He was preparing to qualify for a place on the board, for there was going to be a vacancy by superannuation in about five years. This was down South, in the slavery days. It was the nature of the negro then, as now, to steal watermelons. They stole three of the melons of an adoptive brother of mine, the only good ones he had. I suspected three of a neighbor's negroes, but there was no proof, and, besides, the watermelons in those negroes' private patches were all green and small and not up to indemnity standard. But in the private patches of three other negroes there was a number of competent melons. I consulted with my comrade, the understudy of the board. He said that if I would approve his arrangements he would arrange. I said, "Consider me the board; I approve; arrange." So he took a gun and went and collected three large melons for my brother-on-the-half-shell, and one over. I was greatly pleased and asked:

"Who gets the extra one?"

"Widows and orphans."

"A good idea, too. Why didn't you take thirteen?"

"It would have been wrong; a crime, in fact—theft and extortion."

"What is the one-third extra—the odd melon—the same?"

It caused him to reflect. But there was no result.

The justice of the peace was a stern man. On the trial he found fault with the scheme and required us to explain upon what we based our strange conduct—as he called it. The understudy said:

"On the custom of the niggers. They all do it."[1]

The justice forgot his dignity and descended to sarcasm.

"Custom of the niggers! Are our morals so inadequate that we have to borrow of niggers?"

Then he said to the jury: "Three melons were owing; they were collected from persons not proven to owe them: this is theft; they were collected by compulsion: this is extortion. A melon was added for the widows and orphans. It was owed by no one. It is another theft, another extortion. Return it whence it came, with the others. It is not permissible here to apply to any purpose goods dishonestly obtained; not even to the feeding of widows and orphans, for this would be to put a shame upon charity and dishonor it."

He said it in open court, before everybody, and to me it did not seem very kind.

It was in the midst of the tumult that Clemens, perhaps feeling the need of sacred melody, wrote to Andrew Carnegie:

DEAR SIR & FRIEND,—You seem to be in prosperity. Could you lend an admirer $1.50 to buy a hymn-book with? God will bless you. I feel it; I know it.

N. B.—If there should be other applications, this one not to count. Yours, MARK.

P. S.—Don't send the hymn-book; send the money; I want to make the selection myself.

[1] The point had been made by the board that it was the Chinese custom to make the inhabitants of a village responsible for individual crimes; and custom, likewise, to collect a third in excess of the damage, such surplus having been applied to the support of widows and orphans of the slain converts.

Carnegie answered:

Nothing less than a two-dollar & a half hymn-book *gilt* will do for you. Your place in the choir (celestial) demands that & you shall have it.

There's a new Gospel of Saint Mark in the *North American* which I like better than anything I've read for many a day.

I am willing to borrow a thousand dollars to distribute that sacred message in proper form, & if the author don't object may I send that sum, when I can raise it, to the Anti-Imperialist League, Boston, to which I am a contributor, the only missionary work I am responsible for.

Just tell me you are willing & many thousands of the holy little missals will go forth. This inimitable satire is to become a classic. I count among my privileges in life that I know you, the author.

Perhaps a few more of the letters invited by Mark Twain's criticism of missionary work in China may still be of interest to the reader: Frederick T. Cook, of the Hospital Saturday and Sunday Association, wrote: "I hail you as the Voltaire of America. It is a noble distinction. God bless you and see that you weary not in well-doing in this noblest, sublimest of crusades."

Ministers were by no means all against him. The associate pastor of the Every-day Church, in Boston, sent this line: "I want to thank you for your matchless article in the current *North American.* It must make converts of well-nigh all who read it."

But a Boston school-teacher was angry. "I have been reading the *North American*," she wrote, "and I am filled with shame and remorse that I have dreamed of asking you to come to Boston to talk to the teachers."

On the outside of the envelope Clemens made this pencil note:

"Now, I suppose I offended that young lady by having an opinion of my own, instead of waiting and copying hers. I never thought. I suppose she must be as much

as twenty-five, and probably the only patriot in the country."

A critic with a sense of humor asked: "Please excuse seeming impertinence, but were you ever adjudged insane? Be honest. How much money does the devil give you for arraigning Christianity and missionary causes?"

But there were more of the better sort. Edward S. Martin, in a grateful letter, said: "How gratifying it is to feel that we have a man among us who understands the rarity of the plain truth, and who delights to utter it, and has the gift of doing so without cant and with not too much seriousness."

Sir Hiram Maxim wrote: "I give you my candid opinion that what you have done is of very great value to the civilization of the world. There is no man living whose words carry greater weight than your own, as no one's writings are so eagerly sought after by all classes."

Clemens himself in his note-book set down this aphorism: "Do right and you will be conspicuous."

CCXV

SUMMER AT "THE LAIR"

IN June Clemens took the family to Saranac Lake, to Ampersand. They occupied a log cabin which he called "The Lair," on the south shore, near the water's edge, a remote and beautiful place where, as had happened before, they were so comfortable and satisfied that they hoped to return another summer. There were swimming and boating and long walks in the woods; the worry and noise of the world were far away. They gave little enough attention to the mails. They took only a weekly paper, and were likely to allow it to lie in the post-office uncalled for. Clemens, especially, loved the place, and wrote to Twichell:

I am on the front porch (lower one—main deck) of our little bijou of a dwelling-house. The lake edge (Lower Saranac) is so nearly under me that I can't see the shore, but only the water, smallpoxed with rain splashes—for there is a heavy downpour. It is charmingly like sitting snuggled up on a ship's deck with the stretching sea all around but very much more satisfactory, for at sea a rainstorm is depressing, while here of course the effect engendered is just a deep sense of comfort & contentment. The heavy forest shuts us solidly in on three sides—there are no neighbors. There are beautiful little tan-colored impudent squirrels about. They take tea 5 P.M. (not invited) at the table in the woods where Jean does my typewriting, & one of them has been brave enough to sit upon Jean's knee with his tail curved over his back & munch his food. They come to dinner 7 P.M. on the front porch (not invited), but Clara drives them away. It is an occupation which requires some industry

& attention to business. They all have the one name—Blennerhasset, from Burr's friend—& none of them answers to it except when hungry.

Clemens could work at "The Lair," often writing in shady seclusions along the shore, and he finished there the two-part serial,[1] "A Double-Barrelled Detective Story," intended originally as a burlesque on Sherlock Holmes. It did not altogether fulfil its purpose, and is hardly to be ranked as one of Mark Twain's successes. It contains, however, one paragraph at least by which it is likely to be remembered, a hoax—his last one—on the reader. It runs as follows:

It was a crisp and spicy morning in early October. The lilacs and laburnums, lit with the glory-fires of autumn, hung burning and flashing in the upper air, a fairy bridge provided by kind nature for the wingless wild things that have their home in the tree-tops and would visit together; the larch and the pomegranate flung their purple and yellow flames in brilliant broad splashes along the slanting sweep of woodland, the sensuous fragrance of innumerable deciduous flowers rose upon the swooning atmosphere, far in the empty sky a solitary œsophagus slept upon motionless wing; everywhere brooded stillness, serenity, and the peace of God.

The warm light and luxury of this paragraph are factitious. The careful reader will note that its various accessories are ridiculously associated, and only the most careless reader will accept the œsophagus as a bird. But it disturbed a great many admirers, and numerous letters of inquiry came wanting to know what it was all about. Some suspected the joke and taunted him with it; one such correspondent wrote:

My dear Mark Twain,—Reading your "Double-Barrelled Detective Story" in the January *Harper's* late one night I came

[1] Published in *Harper's Magazine* for January and February, 1902.

to the paragraph where you so *beautifully* describe "a crisp and spicy morning in early October." I read along down the paragraph, conscious only of its *woozy* sound, until I brought up with a start against your œsophagus in the empty sky. Then I read the paragraph again. Oh, Mark Twain! Mark Twain! How could you do it? Put a trap like that into the midst of a tragical story? Do serenity and peace brood over you after you have done such a thing?

Who lit the lilacs, and which end up do they hang? When did larches begin to flame, and who set out the pomegranates in that canyon? What are deciduous flowers, and do they always "bloom in the *fall*, tra la"?

I have been making myself obnoxious to various people by demanding their opinion of that paragraph without telling them the name of the author. They say, "Very well done." "The alliteration is so pretty." "What's an œsophagus, a bird?" "What's it all mean, anyway?" I tell them it means Mark Twain, and that an œsophagus is a kind of *swallow*. Am I right? Or is it a gull? Or a gullet?

Hereafter if you must write such things won't you please be so kind as to label them?

Very sincerely yours,

ALLETTA F. DEAN.

Mark Twain to Miss Dean:

Don't you give that œsophagus away again or I'll never trust you with another privacy!

So many wrote, that Clemens finally felt called upon to make public confession, and as one searching letter had been mailed from Springfield, Massachusetts, he made his reply through the *Republican* of that city. After some opening comment he said:

I published a short story lately & it was in that that I put the œsophagus. I will say privately that I expected it to bother some people—in fact, that was the intention—but the harvest has been larger than I was calculating upon. The œsophagus has gathered in the guilty and the innocent alike, whereas I was only fishing for the innocent—the innocent and confiding.

He quoted a letter from a schoolmaster in the Philippines who thought the passage beautiful with the exception of the curious creature which "slept upon motionless wings." Said Clemens:

Do you notice? Nothing in the paragraph disturbed him but that one word. It shows that that paragraph was most ably constructed for the deception it was intended to put upon the reader. It was my intention that it should read plausibly, and it is now plain that it does; it was my intention that it should be emotional and touching, and you see yourself that it fetched this public instructor. Alas! if I had but left that one treacherous word out I should have scored, scored everywhere, and the paragraph would have slidden through every reader's sensibilities like oil and left not a suspicion behind.

The other sample inquiry is from a professor in a New England university. It contains one naughty word (which I cannot bear to suppress), but he is not in the theological department, so it is no harm:

"DEAR MR. CLEMENS,—'Far in the empty sky a solitary œsophagus slept upon motionless wing.'

"It is not often I get a chance to read much periodical literature, but I have just gone through at this belated period, with much gratification and edification, your 'Double-Barrelled Detective Story.'

"But what in hell is an œsophagus? I keep one myself, but it never sleeps in the air or anywhere else. My profession is to deal with words, and œsophagus interested me the moment I lighted upon it. But, as a companion of my youth used to say, 'I'll be eternally, co-eternally cussed' if I can make it out. Is it a joke or am I an ignoramus?"

Between you and me, I was almost ashamed of having fooled that man, but for pride's sake I was not going to say so. I wrote and told him it was a joke—and that is what I am now saying to my Springfield inquirer. And I told him to carefully read the whole paragraph and he would find not a vestige of sense in any detail of it. This also I recommend to my Springfield inquirer.

I have confessed. I am sorry—partially. I will not do so

any more—for the present. Don't ask me any more questions; let the œsophagus have a rest—on his same old motionless wing.

He wrote Twichell that the story had been a six-day *tour de force*, twenty-five thousand words, and he adds:

How long it takes a literary seed to sprout sometimes! This seed was planted in your house many years ago when you sent me to bed with a book not heard of by me until then—*Sherlock Holmes*. . . .

I've done a grist of writing here this summer, but not for publication soon, if ever. I did write two satisfactory articles for early print, but I've burned one of them & have buried the other in my large box of posthumous stuff. I've got stacks of literary remains piled up there.

Early in August Clemens went with H. H. Rogers in his yacht *Kanawha* on a cruise to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Rogers had made up a party, including ex-Speaker Reed, Dr. Rice, and Col. A. G. Paine. Young Harry Rogers also made one of the party. Clemens kept a log of the cruise, certain entries of which convey something of its spirit. On the 11th, at Yarmouth, he wrote:

Fog-bound. The garrison went ashore. Officers visited the yacht in the evening & said an anvil had been missed. Mr. Rogers paid for the anvil.

August 13th. There is a fine picture-gallery here; the sheriff photographed the garrison, with the exception of Harry (Rogers) and Mr. Clemens.

August 14th. Upon complaint of Mr. Reed another dog was procured. He said he had been a sailor all his life, and considered it dangerous to trust a ship to a dog-watch with only one dog in it.

Poker, for a change.

August 15th. To Rockland, Maine, in the afternoon, arriving about 6 P.M. In the night Dr. Rice baited the anchor with his winnings & caught a whale 90 feet long. He said so himself. It is thought that if there had been another witness like Dr. Rice the whale would have been longer.

August 16th. We could have had a happy time in Bath but for the interruptions caused by people who wanted Mr. Reed to explain votes of the olden time or give back the money. Mr. Rogers recouped them.

Another anvil missed. The descendant of Captain Kidd is the only person who does not blush for these incidents. Harry and Mr. Clemens blush continually. It is believed that if the rest of the garrison were like these two the yacht would be welcome everywhere instead of being quarantined by the police in all the ports. Mr. Clemens & Harry have attracted a great deal of attention, & men have expressed a resolve to turn over a new leaf & copy after them from this out.

Evening. Judge Cohen came over from another yacht to pay his respects to Harry and Mr. Clemens, he having heard of their reputation from the clergy of these coasts. He was invited by the gang to play poker apparently as a courtesy & in a spirit of seeming hospitality, he not knowing them & taking it all at par. Mr. Rogers lent him clothes to go home in.

August 17th. The Reformed Statesman growling and complaining again—not in a frank, straightforward way, but talking at the Commodore, while letting on to be talking to himself. This time he was dissatisfied about the anchor watch; said it was out of date, untrustworthy, & for real efficiency didn't begin with the Waterbury, & was going on to reiterate, as usual, that he had been a pilot all his life & blamed if he ever saw, etc., etc., etc.

But he was not allowed to finish. We put him ashore at Portland.

That is to say, Reed landed at Portland, the rest of the party returning with the yacht.

"We had a noble good time in the yacht," Clemens wrote Twichell on their return. "We caught a Chinee missionary and drowned him.

Twichell had been invited to make one of the party, and this letter was to make him feel sorry he had not accepted.

CCXVI

RIVERDALE. A YALE DEGREE

THE Clemens household did not return to 14 West Tenth Street. They spent a week in Elmira at the end of September, and after a brief stop in New York took up their residence on the northern metropolitan boundary, at Riverdale-on-the-Hudson, in the old Appleton home. They had permanently concluded not to return to Hartford. They had put the property there into an agent's hands for sale. Mrs. Clemens never felt that she had the strength to enter the house again.

The Riverdale place had been selected with due consideration. They decided that they must have easy access to the New York center, but they wished also to have the advantage of space and spreading lawn and trees, large rooms, and light. The Appleton homestead provided these things. It was a house built in the first third of the last century by one of the Morris family, so long prominent in New York history. On passing into the Appleton ownership it had been enlarged and beautified and named "Holbrook Hall." It overlooked the Hudson and the Palisades. It had associations: the Roosevelt family had once lived there, Huxley, Darwin, Tyndall, and others of their intellectual rank had been entertained there during its occupation by the first Appleton, the founder of the publishing firm. The great hall of the added wing was its chief feature. Clemens once remembered:

"We drifted from room to room on our tour of inspection, always with a growing doubt as to whether we wanted

that house or not; but at last, when we arrived in a dining-room that was 60 feet long, 30 feet wide, and had two great fireplaces in it, that settled it."

There were pleasant neighbors at Riverdale, and had it not been for the illnesses that seemed always ready to seize upon that household the home there might have been ideal. They loved the place presently, so much so that they contemplated buying it, but decided that it was too costly. They began to prospect for other places along the Hudson shore. They were anxious to have a home again—one that they could call their own.

Among the many pleasant neighbors at Riverdale were the Dodges, the Quincy Adamses, and the Rev. Mr. Carstensen, a liberal-minded minister with whom Clemens easily affiliated. Clemens and Carstensen visited back and forth and exchanged views. Once Mr. Carstensen told him that he was going to town to dine with a party which included the Reverend Gottheil, a Catholic bishop, an Indian Buddhist, and a Chinese scholar of the Confucian faith, after which they were all going to a Yiddish theater. Clemens said:

"Well, there's only one more thing you need to make the party complete—that is, either Satan or me."

Howells often came to Riverdale. He was living in a New York apartment, and it was handy and made an easy and pleasant outing for him. He says:

"I began to see them again on something like the sweet old terms. They lived far more unpretentiously than they used, and I think with a notion of economy, which they had never very successfully practised. I recall that at the end of a certain year in Hartford, when they had been saving and paying cash for everything, Clemens wrote, reminding me of their avowed experiment, and asking me to guess how many bills they had at New-Year's; he hastened to say that a horse-car would not have held them. At Riverdale they kept no car-

riage, and there was a snowy night when I drove up to their handsome old mansion in the station carryall, which was crusted with mud, as from the going down of the Deluge after transporting Noah and his family from the Ark to whatever point they decided to settle provisionally. But the good talk, the rich talk, the talk that could never suffer poverty of mind or soul was there, and we jubilantly found ourselves again in our middle youth."

Both Howells and Clemens were made doctors of letters by Yale that year and went over in October to receive their degrees. It was Mark Twain's second Yale degree, and it was the highest rank that an American institution of learning could confer.

Twichell wrote:

I want you to understand, old fellow, that it will be in its intention the highest public compliment, and emphatically so in your case, for it will be tendered you by a corporation of gentlemen, the majority of whom do not at all agree with the views on important questions which you have lately promulgated in speech and in writing, and with which you are identified to the public mind. They grant, of course, your right to hold and express those views, though for themselves they don't like 'em; but in awarding you the proposed laurel they will make no count of that whatever. Their action will appropriately signify simply and solely their estimate of your merit and rank as a *man of letters*, and so, as I say, the compliment of it will be of the pure, unadulterated quality.

Howells was not especially eager to go, and tried to conspire with Clemens to arrange some excuse which would keep them at home.

I remember with satisfaction [he wrote] our joint success in keeping away from the Concord Centennial in 1875, and I have been thinking we might help each other in this matter of the Yale Anniversary. What are your plans for getting left, or shall you trust to inspiration?

Their plans did not avail. Both Howells and Clemens went to New Haven to receive their honors.

When they had returned, Howells wrote formally, as became the new rank:

DEAR SIR,—I have long been an admirer of your complete works, several of which I have read, and I am with you shoulder to shoulder in the cause of foreign missions. I would respectfully request a personal interview, and if you will appoint some day and hour most inconvenient to you I will call at your baronial hall. I cannot doubt, from the account of your courtesy given me by the Twelve Apostles, who once visited you in your Hartford home and were mistaken for a syndicate of lightning-rod men, that our meeting will be mutually agreeable.

Yours truly,

W. D. HOWELLS.

DR. CLEMENS.

CCXVII

MARK TWAIN IN POLITICS

THERE was a campaign for the mayoralty of New York City that fall, with Seth Low on the Fusion ticket against Edward M. Shepard as the Tammany candidate. Mark Twain entered the arena to try to defeat Tammany Hall. He wrote and he spoke in favor of clean city government and police reform. He was savagely in earnest and openly denounced the clan of Croker, individually and collectively. He joined a society called The Acorns; and on the 17th of October, at a dinner given by the order at the Waldorf-Astoria, delivered a fierce arraignment, in which he characterized Croker as the Warren Hastings of New York. His speech was really a set of extracts from Edmund Burke's great impeachment of Hastings, substituting always the name of Croker, and paralleling his career with that of the ancient boss of the East India Company.

It was not a humorous speech. It was too denunciatory for that. It probably contained less comic phrasing than any former effort. There is hardly even a suggestion of humor from beginning to end. It concluded with this paraphrase of Burke's impeachment:

I impeach Richard Croker of high crimes and misdemeanors.

I impeach him in the name of the people, whose trust he has betrayed.

I impeach him in the name of all the people of America, whose national character he has dishonored.

I impeach him in the name and by virtue of those eternal laws of justice which he has violated.

I impeach him in the name of human nature itself, which he has cruelly outraged, injured, and oppressed, in both sexes, in every age, rank, situation, and condition of life.

The Acorn speech was greatly relied upon for damage to the Tammany ranks, and hundreds of thousands of copies of it were printed and circulated.[1]

Clemens was really heart and soul in the campaign. He even joined a procession that marched up Broadway, and he made a speech to a great assemblage at Broadway and Leonard Street, when, as he said, he had been sick abed two days and, according to the doctor, should be in bed then.

But I would not stay at home for a nursery disease, and that's what I've got. Now, don't let this leak out all over town, but I've been doing some indiscreet eating—that's all. It wasn't drinking. If it had been I shouldn't have said anything about it.

I ate a banana. I bought it just to clinch the Italian vote for fusion, but I got hold of a Tammany banana by mistake. Just one little nub of it on the end was nice and white. That was the Shepard end. The other nine-tenths were rotten. Now that little white end won't make the rest of the banana good. The nine-tenths will make that little nub rotten, too.

We must get rid of the whole banana, and our Acorn Society is going to do its share, for it is pledged to nothing but the support of good government all over the United States. We will elect the President next time.

It won't be I, for I have ruined my chances by joining the Acorns, and there can be no office-holders among us.

There was a movement which Clemens early nipped in the bud—to name a political party after him.

"I should be far from willing to have a political party named after me," he wrote, "and I would not be willing

[1] The "Edmund Burke on Croker and Tammany" speech had originally been written as an article for the *North American Review*.

to belong to a party which allowed its members to have political aspirations or push friends forward for political preferment."

In other words, he was a knight-errant; his sole purpose for being in politics at all—something he always detested—was to do what he could for the betterment of his people.

He had his reward, for when Election Day came, and the returns were in, the Fusion ticket had triumphed and Tammany had fallen. Clemens received his share of the credit. One paper celebrated him in verse:

> Who killed Croker?
> I, said Mark Twain,
> I killed Croker,
> I, the Jolly Joker!

Among Samuel Clemens's literary remains there is an outline plan for a "Casting-Vote party," whose main object was "to compel the two great parties to nominate their *best man always*." It was to be an organization of an infinite number of clubs throughout the nation, no member of which should seek or accept a nomination for office or any political appointment, but in each case should cast its vote as a unit for the candidate of one of the two great political parties, requiring that the man be of clean record and honest purpose.

> From constable up to President [runs his final clause] there is no office for which the two great parties cannot furnish able, clean, and acceptable men. Whenever the balance of power shall be lodged in a permanent third party, with no candidate of its own and no function but to cast its *whole vote* for the best man put forward by the Republicans and Democrats, these two parties *will select the best man they have in their ranks*. Good and clean government will follow, let its party complexion be what it may, and the country will be quite content.

It was a Utopian idea, very likely, as human nature is made; full of that native optimism which was always

overflowing and drowning his gloomier logic. Clearly he forgot his despair of humanity when he formulated that document, and there is a world of unselfish hope in these closing lines:

> If in the hands of men who regard their citizenship as a high trust this scheme shall fail upon trial a better must be sought, a better must be invented; for it cannot be well or safe to let the present political conditions continue indefinitely. They can be improved, and American citizenship should arouse up from its disheartenment and see that it is done.

Had this document been put into type and circulated it might have founded a true Mark Twain party.

Clemens made not many more speeches that autumn, closing the year at last with the "Founder's Night" speech at The Players, the short address which, ending on the stroke of midnight, dedicates each passing year to the memory of Edwin Booth, and pledges each new year in a loving-cup passed in his honor.

CCXVIII

NEW INTERESTS AND INVESTMENTS

THE spirit which a year earlier had prompted Mark Twain to prepare his "Salutation from the Nineteenth to the Twentieth Century" inspired him now to conceive the "Stupendous International Procession," a gruesome pageant described in a document (unpublished) of twenty-two typewritten pages which begin:

THE STUPENDOUS PROCESSION

At the appointed hour it moved across the world in the following order:

The Twentieth Century

A fair young creature, drunk and disorderly, borne in the arms of Satan. Banner with motto, "Get What You Can, Keep What You Get."

Guard of Honor—Monarchs, Presidents, Tammany Bosses, Burglars, Land Thieves, Convicts, etc., appropriately clothed and bearing the symbols of their several trades.

Christendom

A majestic matron in flowing robes drenched with blood. On her head a golden crown of thorns; impaled on its spines the bleeding heads of patriots who died for their countries—Boers, Boxers, Filipinos; in one hand a slung-shot, in the other a Bible, open at the text "Do unto others," etc. Protruding from pocket bottle labeled "We bring you the blessings of civilization." Necklace—handcuffs and a burglar's jimmy.

Supporters—At one elbow Slaughter, at the other Hypocrisy.

Banner with motto—"Love Your Neighbor's Goods as Yourself."

Ensign—The Black Flag.
Guard of Honor—Missionaries and German, French, Russian, and British soldiers laden with loot.

And so on, with a section for each nation of the earth, headed each by the black flag, each bearing horrid emblems, instruments of torture, mutilated prisoners, broken hearts, floats piled with bloody corpses. At the end of all, banners inscribed:

"All White Men are Born Free and Equal."

"Christ died to make men holy,
Christ died to make men free."

with the American flag furled and draped in crêpe, and the shade of Lincoln towering vast and dim toward the sky, brooding with sorrowful aspect over the far-reaching pageant. With much more of the same sort. It is a fearful document, too fearful, we may believe, for Mrs. Clemens ever to consent to its publication.

Advancing years did little toward destroying Mark Twain's interest in human affairs. At no time in his life was he more variously concerned and employed than in his sixty-seventh year. He was always alive, young, actively cultivating or devising interests—valuable and otherwise, though never less than important to him.

He had plenty of money again, for one thing, and he liked to find dazzlingly new ways for investing it. As in the old days, he was always putting "twenty-five or forty thousand dollars," as he said, into something that promised multiplied returns. Howells tells how he found him looking wonderfully well, and when he asked the name of his elixir he learned that it was plasmon.

I did not immediately understand that plasmon was one of the investments which he had made from "the substance of

things hoped for," and in the destiny of a disastrous disappointment. But after paying off the creditors of his late publishing firm he had to do something with his money, and it was not his fault if he did not make a fortune out of plasmon.

It was just at this period (the beginning of 1902) that he was promoting with his capital and enthusiasm the plasmon interests in America, investing in it one of the "usual amounts," promising to make Howells over again body and soul with the life-giving albuminate. Once he wrote him explicit instructions:

> Yes—take it as a medicine—there is nothing better, nothing surer of desired results. If you wish to be elaborate—which isn't necessary—put a couple of heaping teaspoonfuls of the powder in an inch of milk & stir until it is a paste; put in some more milk and stir the paste to a thin gruel; then fill up the glass and drink.
>
> Or, stir it into your soup.
>
> Or, into your oatmeal.
>
> Or, use any method you like, so's you *get it down*—that is the only essential.

He put another "usual sum" about this time in a patent cash register which was acknowledged to be "a promise rather than a performance," and remains so until this day.

He capitalized a patent spiral hat-pin, warranted to hold the hat on in any weather, and he had a number of the pins handsomely made to present to visitors of the sex naturally requiring that sort of adornment and protection. It was a pretty and ingenious device and apparently effective enough, though it failed to secure his invested thousands.

He invested a lesser sum in shares of the Booklover's Library, which was going to revolutionize the reading world, and which at least paid a few dividends. Even the old Tennessee land will-o'-the-wisp—long since repudiated

and forgotten—when it appeared again in the form of a possible equity in some overlooked fragment, kindled a gentle interest, and was added to his list of ventures.

He made one substantial investment at this period. They became more and more in love with the Hudson environment, its beauty and its easy access to New York. Their house was what they liked it to be—a gathering-place for friends and the world's notables, who could reach it easily and quickly from New York. They had a steady procession of company when Mrs. Clemens's health would permit, and during a single week in the early part of this year entertained guests at no less than seventeen out of their twenty-one meals, and for three out of the seven nights—not an unusual week. Their plan for buying a home on the Hudson ended with the purchase of what was known as Hillcrest, or the Casey place, at Tarrytown, overlooking that beautiful stretch of river, the Tappan Zee, close to the Washington Irving home. The beauty of its outlook and surroundings appealed to them all. The house was handsome and finely placed, and they planned to make certain changes that would adapt it to their needs. The price, which was less than fifty thousand dollars, made it an attractive purchase; and without doubt it would have made them a suitable and happy home had it been written in the future that they should so inherit it.

Clemens was writing pretty steadily these days. The human race was furnishing him with ever so many inspiring subjects, and he found time to touch more or less on most of them. He wreaked his indignation upon the things which exasperated him often—even usually—without the expectation of print; and he delivered himself even more inclusively at such times as he walked the floor between the luncheon or dinner courses, amplifying on the poverty of an invention that had produced mankind as a supreme handiwork. In a letter to Howells he wrote:

Your comments on that idiot's "Ideals" letter reminds me that I preached a good sermon to my family yesterday on his particular layer of the human race, that grotesquest of all the inventions of the Creator. It was a good sermon, but coldly received, & it seemed best not to try to take up a collection.

He once told Howells, with the wild joy of his boyish heart, how Mrs. Clemens found some compensation, when kept to her room by illness, in the reflection that now she would not hear so much about the "damned human race."

Yet he was always the first man to champion that race, and the more unpromising the specimen the surer it was of his protection, and he never invited, never expected gratitude.

One wonders how he found time to do all the things that he did. Besides his legitimate literary labors and his preachments, he was always writing letters to this one and that, long letters on a variety of subjects, carefully and picturesquely phrased, and to people of every sort. He even formed a curious society, whose members were young girls—one in each country of the earth. They were supposed to write to him at intervals on some subject likely to be of mutual interest, to which letters he agreed to reply. He furnished each member with a typewritten copy of the constitution and by-laws of the Juggernaut Club, as he called it, and he apprised each of her election, usually after this fashion:

I have a club—a private club, which is all my own. I appoint the members myself, & they can't help themselves, because I don't allow them to vote on their own appointment & I don't allow them to resign! They are all friends whom I have never seen (save one), but who have written friendly letters to me. By the laws of my club there can be only one member in each country, & there can be no male member but myself. Some day I may admit males, but I don't know—they are capricious & inharmonious, & their ways provoke me a good deal. It is a matter which the club shall decide. I have made four appoint-

ments in the past three or four months: You as a member for Scotland—oh, this good while!; a young citizeness of Joan of Arc's home region as a member for France; a Mohammedan girl as member for Bengal; & a dear & bright young niece of mine as member for the United States—for I do not represent a country myself, but am merely member-at-large for the human race. You must not try to resign, for the laws of the club do not allow that. You must console yourself by remembering that you are in the best company; that nobody knows of your membership except yourself; that no member knows another's name, but only her country; that no taxes are levied and no meetings held (but how dearly I should like to attend one!). One of my members is a princess of a royal house, another is the daughter of a village bookseller on the continent of Europe, for the only qualification for membership is intellect & the spirit of good-will; other distinctions, hereditary or acquired, do not count. May I send you the constitution & laws of the club? I shall be so glad if I may.

It was just one of his many fancies, and most of the active memberships would not long be maintained; though some continued faithful in their reports, as he did in his replies, to the end.

One of the more fantastic of his conceptions was a plan to advertise for ante-mortem obituaries of himself—in order, as he said, that he might look them over and enjoy them and make certain corrections in the matter of detail. Some of them he thought might be appropriate to read from the platform.

I will correct them—not the facts, but the verdicts—striking out such clauses as could have a deleterious influence on the other side, and replacing them with clauses of a more judicious character.

He was much taken with the new idea, and his request for such obituaries, with an offer of a prize for the best —a portrait of himself drawn by his own hand—really appeared in *Harper's Weekly* later in the year. Naturally he

got a shower of responses—serious, playful, burlesque. Some of them were quite worth while.

The obvious "Death loves a shining Mark" was of course numerously duplicated, and some varied it "Death loves an Easy Mark," and there was "Mark, the perfect man."

The two that follow gave him especial pleasure.

OBITUARY FOR "MARK TWAIN"

Worthy of his portrait, a place on his monument, as well as a place among his "perennial-consolation heirlooms":

"Got up; washed; went to bed."

The subject's own words (see *Innocents Abroad*). Can't go back on your own words, Mark Twain. There's nothing *"to strike out"*; nothing *"to replace."* What *more* could be said of any one?

"Got up!"—Think of the *fullness* of *meaning!* The *possibilities* of life, its achievements—physical, intellectual, spiritual. Got up to the top!—the climax of human aspiration on earth!

"Washed"—Every whit clean; purified—body, soul, thoughts, purposes.

"Went to bed"—Work all done—to rest, to sleep. The culmination of the day well spent!

God looks after the awakening.

Mrs. S. A. OREN-HAYNES.

Mark Twain was the only man who ever lived, so far as we know, whose lies were so innocent, and withal so helpful, as to make them worth more than a whole lot of fossilized priests' eternal truths.

D. H. KENNER.

CCXIX

YACHTING AND THEOLOGY

CLEMENS made fewer speeches during the Riverdale period. He was as frequently demanded, but he had a better excuse for refusing, especially the evening functions. He attended a good many luncheons with friendly spirits like Howells, Matthews, James L. Ford, and Hamlin Garland. At the end of February he came down to the Mayor's dinner given to Prince Henry of Prussia, but he did not speak. Clemens used to say afterward that he had not been asked to speak, and that it was probably because of his supposed breach of etiquette at the Kaiser's dinner in Berlin; but the fact that Prince Henry sought him out, and was most cordially and humanly attentive during a considerable portion of the evening, is against the supposition.

Clemens attended a Yale alumni dinner that winter and incidentally visited Twichell in Hartford. The old question of moral responsibility came up and Twichell lent his visitor a copy of Jonathan Edwards's *Freedom of the Will* for train perusal. Clemens found it absorbing. Later he wrote Twichell his views.

DEAR JOE,—(After compliments.)[1] From Bridgeport to New York, thence to home, & continuously until near midnight

[1] Meaning "What a good time you gave me; what a happiness it was to be under your roof again," etc. See opening sentence of all translations of letters passing between Lord Roberts and Indian princes and rulers.

I wallowed & reeked with Jonathan in his insane debauch; rose immensely refreshed & fine at ten this morning, but with a strange & haunting sense of having been on a three days' tear with a drunken lunatic. It is years since I have known these sensations. All through the book is the glare of a resplendent intellect gone mad—a marvelous spectacle. No, not *all* through the book—the drunk does not come on till the last third, where what I take to be Calvinism & its God begins to show up & shine red & hideous in the glow from the fires of hell, their only right and proper adornment.

Jonathan seems to hold (as against the Armenian position) that the man (or his soul or his will) never *creates* an impulse itself, but is moved to action by an impulse back of it. That's sound!

Also, that of two or more things offered it, it infallibly chooses the one which for the moment is most *pleasing* to ITSELF. *Perfectly* correct! An immense admission for a man not otherwise sane.

Up to that point he could have written Chapters III & IV of my suppressed *Gospel*. But there we seem to separate. He seems to concede the indisputable & unshaken dominion of Motive & Necessity (call them what he may, these are exterior forces & not under the man's authority, guidance, or even suggestion); then he suddenly flies the logical track & (to all seeming) makes the man & not those exterior forces responsible to God for the man's thoughts, words, & acts. It is frank insanity.

I think that when he concedes the autocratic dominion of Motive and Necessity he grants a *third* position of mine—that a man's mind is a mere machine—an *automatic* machine—which is handled entirely from the *outside*, the man himself furnishing it absolutely nothing; not an ounce of its fuel, & not so much as a bare *suggestion* to that exterior engineer as to what the machine shall do nor *how* it shall do it nor *when*.

After that concession it was time for him to get alarmed & *shirk*—for he was pointed straight for the only rational & possible next station on *that* piece of road—the irresponsibility of man to God.

And so he shirked. Shirked, and arrived at this handsome result:

Man is commanded to do so & so.

It has been ordained from the beginning of time that some men *sha'n't* & others *can't.*

These are to blame: let them be damned.

I enjoy the Colonel very much, & shall enjoy the rest of him with an obscene delight.

Joe, the whole tribe shout love to you & yours! MARK.

Clemens was moved to set down some theology of his own, and did so in a manuscript which he entitled, "If I Could Be There." It is in the dialogue form he often adopted for polemic writing. It is a colloquy between the Master of the Universe and a Stranger. It begins:

I

If I could be there, hidden under the steps of the throne, I should hear conversations like this:

A STRANGER. Lord, there is one who needs to be punished, and has been overlooked. It is in the record. I have found it.

LORD. By searching?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. Who is it? What is it?

S. A man.

L. Proceed.

S. He died in sin. Sin committed by his great-grandfather.

L. When was this?

S. Eleven million years ago.

L. Do you know what a microbe is?

S. Yes, Lord. It is a creature too small to be detected by my eye.

L. He commits depredations upon your blood?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. I give you leave to subject him to a billion years of misery for this offense. Go! Work your will upon him.

S. But, Lord, I have nothing against him; I am indifferent to him.

L. Why?

S. He is so infinitely small and contemptible. I am to him as is a mountain-range to a grain of sand.

L. What am I to man?

S. (Silent.)

L. Am I not, to a man, as is a billion solar systems to a grain of sand?

S. It is true, Lord.

L. Some microbes are larger than others. Does man regard the difference?

S. No, Lord. To him there is no difference of consequence. To him they are all microbes, all infinitely little and equally inconsequential.

L. To me there is no difference of consequence between a man & a microbe. Man looks down upon the speck at his feet called a microbe from an altitude of a thousand miles, so to speak, and regards him with indifference; I look down upon the specks called a man and a microbe from an altitude of a billion leagues, so to speak, and to me they are of a size. To me both are inconsequential. Man kills the microbes when he can?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. Then what? Does he keep him in mind years and years and go on contriving miseries for him?

S. No, Lord.

L. Does he forget him?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. Why?

S. He cares nothing more about him.

L. Employs himself with more important matters?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. Apparently man is quite a rational and dignified person, and can divorce his mind from uninteresting trivialities. Why does he affront me with the fancy that I interest Myself in trivialities—like men and microbes?

II

L. Is it true the human race thinks the universe was created for its convenience?

S. Yes, Lord.

L. The human race is modest. Speaking as a member of it, what do you think the other animals are for?

S. To furnish food and labor for man.

L. What is the sea for?

S. To furnish food for man. Fishes.

L. And the air?

S. To furnish sustenance for man. Birds and breath.

L. How many men are there?

S. Fifteen hundred millions.

L. (Referring to notes.) Take your pencil and set down some statistics. In a healthy man's lower intestine 28,000,000 microbes are born daily and die daily. In the rest of a man's body 122,000,000 microbes are born daily and die daily. The two sums aggregate—what?

S. About 150,000,000.

L. In ten days the aggregate reaches what?

S. Fifteen hundred millions.

L. It is for one person. What would it be for the whole human population?

S. Alas, Lord, it is beyond the power of figures to set down that multitude. It is billions of billions multiplied by billions of billions, and these multiplied again and again by billions of billions. The figures would stretch across the universe and hang over into space on both sides.

L. To what intent are these uncountable microbes introduced into the human race?

S. That they may eat.

L. Now then, according to man's own reasoning, what is man for?

S. Alas—alas—

L. What is he *for?*

S. To—to—furnish food for microbes.

L. Manifestly. A child could see it. Now then, with this common-sense light to aid your perceptions, what are the air, the land, and the ocean for?

S. To furnish food for man so that he may nourish, support, and multiply and replenish the microbes.

L. Manifestly. Does one build a boarding-house for the sake of the boarding-house itself or for the sake of the boarders?

S. Certainly for the sake of the boarders.

L. Man's a boarding-house.

S. I perceive it, Lord.

L. He is a boarding-house. He was never intended for any-

thing else. If he had had less vanity and a clearer insight into the great truths that lie embedded in statistics he would have found it out early. As concerns the man who has gone unpunished eleven million years, is it your belief that in life he did his duty by his microbes?

S. Undoubtedly, Lord. He could not help it.

L. Then why punish him? He had no other duty to perform.

Whatever else may be said of this kind of doctrine, it is at least original and has a conclusive sound. Mark Twain had very little use for orthodoxy and conservatism. When it was announced that Dr. Jacques Loeb, of the University of California, had demonstrated the creation of life by chemical agencies he was deeply interested. When a newspaper writer commented that a "consensus of opinion among biologists" would probably rate Dr. Loeb as a man of lively imagination rather than an inerrant investigator of natural phenomena, he felt called to chaff the consensus idea.

I wish I could be as young as that again. Although I seem so old now I was once as young as that. I remember, as if it were but thirty or forty years ago, how a paralyzing consensus of opinion accumulated from experts a-setting around about brother experts who had patiently and laboriously cold-chiseled their way into one or another of nature's safe-deposit vaults and were reporting that they had found something valuable was plenty for me. It settled it.

But it isn't so now—no. Because in the drift of the years I by and by found out that a Consensus examines a new thing with its feelings rather oftener than with its mind.

There was that primitive steam-engine—ages back, in Greek times: a Consensus made fun of it. There was the Marquis of Worcester's steam-engine 250 years ago: a Consensus made fun of it. There was Fulton's steamboat of a century ago: a French Consensus, including the great Napoleon, made fun of it. There was Priestley, with his oxygen: a Consensus scoffed at him, mobbed him, burned him out, banished him. While a Consensus was proving, by statistics and things, that a steamship could not cross the Atlantic, a steamship did it.

And so on through a dozen pages or more of lively satire, ending with an extract from *Adam's Diary*.

Then there was a Consensus about it. It was the very first one. It sat six days and nights. It was then delivered of the verdict that a world could not be made out of nothing; that such small things as sun and moon and stars might, maybe, but it would take years and years if there was considerable many of them. Then the Consensus got up and looked out of the window, and there was the whole outfit, spinning and sparkling in space! You never saw such a disappointed lot.

ADAM.

He was writing much at this time, mainly for his own amusement, though now and then he offered one of his reflections for print. That beautiful fairy tale, "The Five Boons of Life," of which the most precious is "Death," was written at this period. Maeterlinck's lovely story of the bee interested him; he wrote about that. Somebody proposed a Martyrs' Day; he wrote a paper ridiculing the suggestion. In his note-book, too, there is a memorandum for a love-story of the Quarternary Epoch which would begin, "On a soft October afternoon 2,000,000 years ago." John Fiske's *Discovery of America*, Volume I, he said, was to furnish the animals and scenery, civilization and conversation to be the same as to-day; but apparently this idea was carried no further. He ranged through every subject from protoplasm to infinity, exalting, condemning, ridiculing, explaining; his brain was always busy —a dynamo that rested neither night nor day.

In April Clemens received notice of another yachting trip on the *Kanawha*, which this time would sail for the Bahama and West India islands. The guests were to be about the same.[1]

[1] The invited ones of the party were Hon. T. B. Reed, A. G. Paine, Laurence Hutton, Dr. C. C. Rice, W. T. Foote, and S. L. Clemens. "Owners of the yacht," Mr. Rogers called them, signing himself as "Their Guest."

He sent this telegram:

H. H. Rogers,
Fairhaven, Mass.
Can't get away this week. I have company here from to-night till middle of next week. Will *Kanawha* be sailing after that & can I go as Sunday-school superintendent at half rate? Answer and prepay. Dr. Clemens.

The sailing date was conveniently arranged and there followed a happy cruise among those balmy islands. Mark Twain was particularly fond of "Tom" Reed, who had been known as "Czar" Reed in Congress, but was delightfully human in his personal life. They argued politics a good deal, and Reed, with all his training and intimate practical knowledge of the subject, confessed that he "couldn't argue with a man like that."

"Do you believe the things you say?" he asked once, in his thin, falsetto voice.

"Yes," said Clemens. "Some of them."

"Well, you want to look out. If you go on this way, by and by you'll get to believing nearly *every*thing you say."

Draw poker appears to have been their favorite diversion. Clemens in his notes reports that off the coast of Florida Reed won twenty-three pots in succession. It was said afterward that they made no stops at any harbor; that when the chief officer approached the poker-table and told them they were about to enter some important port he received peremptory orders to "sail on and not interrupt the game." This, however, may be regarded as more or less founded on fiction.

CCXX

MARK TWAIN AND THE PHILIPPINES

AMONG the completed manuscripts of the early part of 1902 was a *North American Review* article (published in April)—"Does the Race of Man Love a Lord?"—a most interesting treatise on snobbery as a universal weakness. There were also some papers on the Philippine situation. In one of these Clemens wrote:

We have bought some islands from a party who did not own them; with real smartness and a good counterfeit of disinterested friendliness we coaxed a confiding weak nation into a trap and closed it upon them; we went back on an honored guest of the Stars and Stripes when we had no further use for him and chased him to the mountains; we are as indisputably in possession of a wide-spreading archipelago as if it were our property; we have pacified some thousands of the islanders and buried them; destroyed their fields; burned their villages, and turned their widows and orphans out-of-doors; furnished heartbreak by exile to some dozens of disagreeable patriots; subjugated the remaining ten millions by Benevolent Assimilation, which is the pious new name of the musket; we have acquired property in the three hundred concubines and other slaves of our business partner, the Sultan of Sulu, and hoisted our protecting flag over that swag.

And so, by these Providences of God—the phrase is the government's, not mine—we are a World Power; and are glad and proud, and have a back seat in the family. With tacks in it. At least we are letting on to be glad and proud; it is the best way. Indeed, it is the only way. We must maintain our dignity, for people are looking. We are a World Power; we cannot get out of it now, and we must make the best of it.

And again he wrote:

I am not finding fault with this use of our flag, for in order not to seem eccentric I have swung around now and joined the nation in the conviction that nothing can sully a flag. I was not properly reared, and had the illusion that a flag was a thing which must be sacredly guarded against shameful uses and unclean contacts lest it suffer pollution; and so when it was sent out to the Philippines to float over a wanton war and a robbing expedition I supposed it was polluted, and in an ignorant moment I said so. But I stand corrected. I concede and acknowledge that it was only the government that sent it on such an errand that was polluted. Let us compromise on that. I am glad to have it that way. For our flag could not well stand pollution, never having been used to it, but it is different with the administration.

A much more conspicuous comment on the Philippine policy was the so-called "Defense of General Funston" for what Funston himself referred to as a "dirty Irish trick"; that is to say, deception in the capture of Aguinaldo. Clemens, who found it hard enough to reconcile himself to any form of warfare, was especially bitter concerning this particular campaign. The article appeared in the *North American Review* for May, 1902, and stirred up a good deal of a storm. He wrote much more on the subject—very much more—but it is still unpublished.

CCXXI

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

ONE day in April, 1902, Samuel Clemens received the following letter from the president of the University of Missouri:

My dear Mr. Clemens,—Although you received the degree of doctor of literature last fall from Yale, and have had other honors conferred upon you by other great universities, we want to adopt you here as a son of the University of Missouri. In asking your permission to confer upon you the degree of LL.D. the University of Missouri does not aim to confer an honor upon you so much as to show her appreciation of you. The rules of the University forbid us to confer the degree upon any one *in absentia*. I hope very much that you can so arrange your plans as to be with us on the fourth day of next June, when we shall hold our Annual Commencement.

Very truly yours,
R. H. Jesse.

Clemens had not expected to make another trip to the West, but a proffered honor such as this from one's native State was not a thing to be declined.

It was at the end of May when he arrived in St. Louis, and he was met at the train there by his old river instructor and friend, Horace Bixby—as fresh, wiry, and capable as he had been forty-five years before.

"I have become an old man. You are still thirty-five," Clemens said.

They went to the Planters Hotel, and the news presently got around that Mark Twain was there. There followed

a sort of reception in the hotel lobby, after which Bixby took him across to the rooms of the Pilots Association, where the rivermen gathered in force to celebrate his return. A few of his old comrades were still alive, among them Beck Jolly. The same afternoon he took the train for Hannibal.

It was a busy five days that he had in Hannibal. High-school commencement day came first. He attended, and willingly, or at least patiently, sat through the various recitals and orations and orchestrations, dreaming and remembering, no doubt, other high-school commencements of more than half a century before, seeing in some of those young people the boys and girls he had known in that vanished time. A few friends of his youth were still there, but they were among the audience now, and no longer fresh and looking into the future. Their heads were white, and, like him, they were looking down the recorded years. Laura Hawkins was there and Helen Kercheval (Mrs. Frazer and Mrs. Garth now), and there were others, but they were few and scattering.

He was added to the program, and he made himself as one of the graduates, and told them some things of the young people of that earlier time that brought their laughter and their tears.

He was asked to distribute the diplomas, and he undertook the work in his own way. He took an armful of them and said to the graduates:

"Take one. Pick out a good one. Don't take two, but be sure you get a good one."

So each took one "unsight and unseen" and made the more exact distributions among themselves later.

Next morning—it was Saturday—he visited the old home on Hill Street, and stood in the doorway all dressed in white while a battalion of photographers made pictures of "this return of the native" to the threshold of his youth.

"It all seems so small to me," he said, as he looked through the house; "a boy's home is a big place to him. I suppose if I should come back again ten years from now it would be the size of a bird-house."

He went through the rooms and up-stairs where he had slept and looked out the window down in the back yard where, nearly sixty years before, Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn, Joe Harper, and the rest—that is to say, Tom Blankenship, John Briggs, Will Pitts, and the Bowen boys —set out on their nightly escapades. Of that lightsome band Will Pitts and John Briggs still remained, with half a dozen others—schoolmates of the less adventurous sort. Buck Brown, who had been his rival in the spelling contests, was still there, and John RoBards, who had worn golden curls and the medal for good conduct, and Ed Pierce. And while these were assembled in a little group on the pavement outside the home a small old man came up and put out his hand, and it was Jimmy MacDaniel, to whom so long before, sitting on the river-bank and eating gingerbread, he had first told the story of Jim Wolfe and the cats.

They put him into a carriage, drove him far and wide, and showed the hills and resorts and rendezvous of Tom Sawyer and his marauding band.

He was entertained that evening by the Labinnah Club (whose name was achieved by a backward spelling of Hannibal), where he found most of the survivors of his youth. The news report of that occasion states that he was introduced by Father McLoughlin, and that he "responded in a very humorous and touchingly pathetic way, breaking down in tears at the conclusion. Commenting on his boyhood days and referring to his mother was too much for the great humorist. Before him as he spoke were sitting seven of his boyhood friends."

On Sunday morning Col. John RoBards escorted him to the various churches and Sunday-schools. They were all

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new churches to Samuel Clemens, but he pretended not to recognize this fact. In each one he was asked to speak a few words, and he began by saying how good it was to be back in the old home Sunday-school again, which as a boy he had always so loved, and he would go on and point out the very place he had sat, and his escort hardly knew whether or not to enjoy the proceedings. At one place he told a moral story. He said:

Little boys and girls, I want to tell you a story which illustrates the value of perseverance—of sticking to your work, as it were. It is a story very proper for a Sunday-school. When I was a little boy in Hannibal I used to play a good deal up here on Holliday's Hill, which of course you all know. John Briggs and I played up there. I don't suppose there are any little boys as good as we were then, but of course that is not to be expected. Little boys in those days were 'most always good little boys, because those were the good old times when everything was better than it is now, but never mind that. Well, once upon a time, on Holliday's Hill, they were blasting out rock, and a man was drilling for a blast. He sat there and drilled and drilled and drilled perseveringly until he had a hole down deep enough for the blast. Then he put in the powder and tamped and tamped it down, but maybe he tamped it a little too hard, for the blast went off and he went up into the air, and we watched him. He went up higher and higher and got smaller and smaller. First he looked as big as a child, then as big as a dog, then as big as a kitten, then as big as a bird, and finally he went out of sight. John Briggs was with me, and we watched the place where he went out of sight, and by and by we saw him coming down—first as big as a bird, then as big as a kitten, then as big as a dog, then as big as a child, and then he was a man again, and landed right in his seat and went to drilling—just persevering, you see, and sticking to his work. Little boys and girls, that's the secret of success, just like that poor but honest workman on Holliday's Hill. Of course you won't always be appreciated. He wasn't. His employer was a hard man, and on Saturday night when he paid him he docked him fifteen minutes for the time he was up in the air—but never mind, he had his reward.

He told all this in his solemn, grave way, though the Sunday-school was in a storm of enjoyment when he finished. There still remains a doubt in Hannibal as to its perfect suitability, but there is no doubt as to its acceptability.

That Sunday afternoon, with John Briggs, he walked over Holliday's Hill—the "Cardiff Hill" of *Tom Sawyer*. It was just such a Sunday as that one when they had so nearly demolished the negro driver and had damaged a cooper-shop. They calculated that nearly three thousand Sundays had passed since then, and now here they were once more, two old men, with the hills still fresh and green, the river still sweeping by and rippling in the sun. Standing there together and looking across to the low-lying Illinois shore, and to the green islands where they had played, and to Lover's Leap on the south, the man who had been Sam Clemens said:

"John, that is one of the loveliest sights I ever saw. Down there by the island is the place we used to swim, and yonder is where a man was drowned, and there's where the steamboat sank. Down there on Lover's Leap is where the Millerites put on their robes one night to go to heaven. None of them went that night, but I suppose most of them have gone now."

John Briggs said:

"Sam, do you remember the day we stole the peaches from old man Price and one of his bow-legged niggers came after us with the dogs, and how we made up our minds that we'd catch that nigger and drown him?"

They came to the place where they had pried out the great rock that had so nearly brought them to grief. Sam Clemens said:

"John, if we had killed that man we'd have had a dead nigger on our hands without a cent to pay for him."

And so they talked on of this thing and that, and by and by they drove along the river, and Sam Clemens pointed

out the place where he swam it and was taken with a cramp on the return swim, and believed for a while that his career was about to close.

"Once, near the shore, I thought I would let down," he said, "but was afraid to, knowing that if the water was deep I was a goner, but finally my knees struck the sand and I crawled out. That was the closest call I ever had."

They drove by the place where the haunted house had stood. They drank from a well they had always known, and from the bucket as they had always drunk, talking and always talking, fondling lovingly and lingeringly that most beautiful of all our possessions, the past.

"Sam," said John, when they parted, "this is probably the last time we shall meet on this earth. God bless you. Perhaps somewhere we shall renew our friendship."

"John," was the answer, "this day has been worth thousands of dollars to me. We were like brothers once, and I feel that we are the same now. Good-by, John. I'll try to meet you—somewhere."

CCXXII

A PROPHET HONORED IN HIS COUNTRY

CLEMENS left next day for Columbia. Committees met him at Rensselaer, Monroe City, Clapper, Stoutsville, Paris, Madison, Moberly—at every station along the line of his travel. At each place crowds were gathered when the train pulled in, to cheer and wave and to present him with flowers. Sometimes he spoke a few words; but oftener his eyes were full of tears—his voice would not come.

There is something essentially dramatic in official recognition by one's native State—the return of the lad who has set out unknown to battle with life, and who, having conquered, is invited back to be crowned. No other honor, however great and spectacular, is quite like that, for there is in it a pathos and a completeness that are elemental and stir emotions as old as life itself.

It was on the 4th of June, 1902, that Mark Twain received his doctor of laws degree from the State University at Columbia, Missouri. James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture, and Ethan Allen Hitchcock, Secretary of the Interior, were among those similarly honored. Mark Twain was naturally the chief attraction. Dressed in his Yale scholastic gown he led the procession of graduating students, and, as in Hannibal, awarded them their diplomas. The regular exercises were made purposely brief in order that some time might be allowed for the conferring of the degrees. This ceremony was a peculiarly impressive one. Gardner Lathrop read a brief state-

ment introducing "America's foremost author and best-loved citizen, Samuel Langhorne Clemens—Mark Twain."

Clemens rose, stepped out to the center of the stage, and paused. He seemed to be in doubt as to whether he should make a speech or simply express his thanks and retire. Suddenly, and without a signal, the great audience rose as one man and stood in silence at his feet. He bowed, but he could not speak. Then that vast assembly began a peculiar chant, spelling out slowly the word Missouri, with a pause between each letter. It was dramatic; it was tremendous in its impressiveness. He had recovered himself when they finished. He said he didn't know whether he was expected to make a speech or not. They did not leave him in doubt. They cheered and demanded a speech, *a speech*, and he made them one—one of the speeches he could make best, full of quaint phrasing, happy humor, gentle and dramatic pathos. He closed by telling the watermelon story for its "moral effect."

He was the guest of E. W. Stevens in Columbia, and a dinner was given in his honor. They would have liked to keep him longer, but he was due in St. Louis again to join in the dedication of the grounds, where was to be held a World's Fair, to celebrate the Louisiana Purchase. Another ceremony he attended was the christening of the St. Louis harbor-boat, or rather the rechristening, for it had been decided to change its name from the *St. Louis* [1] to the *Mark Twain*. A short trip was made on it for the ceremony. Governor Francis and Mayor Wells were of the party, and Count and Countess Rochambeau and Marquis de Lafayette, with the rest of the French group that had come over for the dedication of the World's Fair grounds.

Mark Twain himself was invited to pilot the harbor-

[1] Originally the *Elon G. Smith*, built in 1873.

boat, and so returned for the last time to his old place at the wheel. They all collected in the pilot-house behind him, feeling that it was a memorable occasion. They were going along well enough when he saw a little ripple running out from the shore across the bow. In the old days he could have told whether it indicated a bar there or was only caused by the wind, but he could not be sure any more. Turning to the pilot languidly, he said:

"I feel a little tired. I guess you had better take the wheel."

Luncheon was served aboard, and Mayor Wells made the christening speech; then the Countess Rochambeau took a bottle of champagne from the hand of Governor Francis and smashed it on the deck, saying, "I christen thee, good boat, *Mark Twain*." So it was, the Mississippi joined in according him honors. In his speech of reply he paid tribute to those illustrious visitors from France and recounted something of the story of French exploration along that great river.

"The name of La Salle will last as long as the river itself," he said; "will last until commerce is dead. We have allowed the commerce of the river to die, but it was to accommodate the railroads, and we must be grateful."

Carriages were waiting for them when the boat landed in the afternoon, and the party got in and were driven to a house which had been identified as Eugene Field's birthplace. A bronze tablet recording this fact had been installed, and this was to be the unveiling. The place was not in an inviting quarter of the town. It stood in what is known as Walsh's Row—fashionable enough once, perhaps, but long since fallen into disrepute. Ragged children played in the doorways, and thirsty lodgers were making trips with tin pails to convenient bar-rooms. A curious nondescript audience assembled around the little group of dedicators, wondering what it was all

about. The tablet was concealed by the American flag, which could be easily pulled away by an attached cord.

Governor Francis spoke a few words, to the effect that they had gathered here to unveil a tablet to an American poet, and that it was fitting that Mark Twain should do this. They removed their hats, and Clemens, his white hair blowing in the wind, said:

"My friends, we are here with reverence and respect to commemorate and enshrine in memory the house where was born a man who, by his life, made bright the lives of all who knew him, and by his literary efforts cheered the thoughts of thousands who never knew him. I take pleasure in unveiling the tablet of Eugene Field."

The flag fell and the bronze inscription was revealed. By this time the crowd, generally, had recognized who it was that was speaking. A working-man proposed three cheers for Mark Twain, and they were heartily given. Then the little party drove away, while the neighborhood collected to regard the old house with a new interest.

It was reported to Clemens later that there was some dispute as to the identity of the Field birthplace. He said:

"Never mind. It is of no real consequence whether it is his birthplace or not. A rose in any other garden will bloom as sweet."

CCXXIII

AT YORK HARBOR

THEY decided to spend the summer at York Harbor, Maine. They engaged a cottage there, and about the end of June Mr. Rogers brought his yacht *Kanawha* to their water-front at Riverdale, and in perfect weather took them to Maine by sea. They landed at York Harbor and took possession of their cottage, The Pines, one of their many attractive summer lodges. Howells, at Kittery Point, was not far away, and everything promised a happy summer.

Mrs. Clemens wrote to Mrs. Crane:

> We are in the midst of pines. They come up right about us, and the house is so high and the roots of the trees are so far below the veranda that we are right in the branches. We drove over to call on Mr. and Mrs. Howells. The drive was most beautiful, and never in my life have I seen such a variety of wild flowers in so short a space.

Howells tells us of the wide, low cottage in a pine grove overlooking York River, and how he used to sit with Clemens that summer at a corner of the veranda farthest away from Mrs. Clemens's window, where they could read their manuscripts to each other, and tell their stories and laugh their hearts out without disturbing her.

Clemens, as was his habit, had taken a work-room in a separate cottage "in the house of a friend and neighbor, a fisherman and a boatman":

There was a table where he could write, and a bed where he could lie down and read; and there, unless my memory has played me one of those constructive tricks that people's memories indulge in, he read me the first chapters of an admirable story. The scene was laid in a Missouri town, and the characters such as he had known in boyhood; but often as I tried to make him own it, he denied having written any such story; it is possible that I dreamed it, but I hope the MS. will yet be found.

Howells did not dream it; but in one way his memory misled him. The story was one which Clemens had heard in Hannibal, and he doubtless related it in his vivid way. Howells, writing at a later time, quite naturally included it among the several manuscripts which Clemens read aloud to him. Clemens may have intended to write the tale, may even have begun it, though this is unlikely. The incidents were too well known and too notorious in his old home for fiction.

Among the stories that Clemens did show, or read, to Howells that summer was "The Belated Passport," a strong, intensely interesting story with what Howells in a letter calls a "goat's tail ending," perhaps meaning that it stopped with a brief and sudden shake—with a joke, in fact, altogether unimportant, and on the whole disappointing to the reader. A far more notable literary work of that summer grew out of a true incident which Howells related to Clemens as they sat chatting together on the veranda overlooking the river one summer afternoon. It was a pathetic episode in the life of some former occupants of The Pines—the tale of a double illness in the household, where a righteous deception was carried on during several weeks for the benefit of a life that was about to slip away. Out of this grew the story, "Was it Heaven? or Hell?" a heartbreaking history which probes the very depths of the human soul. Next to "Hadleyburg," it is Mark Twain's greatest fictional sermon.

Clemens that summer wrote, or rather finished, his most

pretentious poem. One day at Riverdale, when Mrs. Clemens had been with him on the lawn, they had remembered together the time when their family of little folks had filled their lives so full, conjuring up dream-like glimpses of them in the years of play and short frocks and hair-plaits down their backs. It was pathetic, heart-wringing fancying; and later in the day Clemens conceived and began the poem which now he brought to conclusion. It was built on the idea of a mother who imagines her dead child still living, and describes to any listener the pictures of her fancy. It is an impressive piece of work; but the author, for some reason, did not offer it for publication.[1]

Mrs. Clemens, whose health earlier in the year had been delicate, became very seriously ill at York Harbor. Howells writes:

> At first she had been about the house, and there was one gentle afternoon when she made tea for us in the parlor, but that was the last time I spoke with her. After that it was really a question of how soonest and easiest she could be got back to Riverdale.

She had seemed to be in fairly good health and spirits for several weeks after the arrival at York. Then, early in August, there came a great celebration of some municipal anniversary, and for two or three days there were processions, mass-meeting and so on, by day, with fireworks at night. Mrs. Clemens, always young in spirit, was greatly interested. She went about more than her strength warranted, seeing and hearing and enjoying all that was going on. She was finally persuaded to forego the remaining ceremonies and rest quietly on the pleasant veranda at home; but she had overtaxed herself and

[1] This poem was completed on the anniversary of Susy's death and is of considerable length. Some selections from it will be found under Appendix U, at the end of this work.

a collapse was inevitable. Howells and two friends called one afternoon, and a friend of the Queen of Rumania, a Madame Hartwig, who had brought from that gracious sovereign a letter which closed in this simple and modest fashion:

I beg your pardon for being a bore to one I so deeply love and admire, to whom I owe days and days of forgetfulness of self and troubles, and the intensest of all joys—hero-worship! People don't always realize what a happiness that is! God bless you for every beautiful thought you poured into my tired heart, and for every smile on a weary way. CARMEN SYLVA.

This was the occasion mentioned by Howells when Mrs. Clemens made tea for them in the parlor for the last time. Her social life may be said to have ended that afternoon. Next morning the break came. Clemens, in his note-book for that day, writes:

Tuesday, August 12, 1902. At 7 A.M. Livy taken violently ill. Telephoned and Dr. Lambert was here in ½ hour. She could not breathe—was likely to stifle. Also she had severe palpitation. She believed she was dying. I also believed it.

Nurses were summoned, and Mrs. Crane and others came from Elmira. Clara Clemens took charge of the household and matters generally, and the patient was secluded and guarded from every disturbing influence. Clemens slipped about with warnings of silence. A visitor found notices in Mark Twain's writing pinned to the trees near Mrs. Clemens's window warning the birds not to sing too loudly.

The patient rallied, but she remained very much debilitated. On September 3d the note-book says:

Always Mr. Rogers keeps his yacht *Kanawha* in commission & ready to fly here and take us to Riverdale on telegraphic notice.

But Mrs. Clemens was unable to return by sea. When it was decided at last, in October, that she could be removed to Riverdale, Clemens and Howells went to Boston and engaged an invalid car to make the journey from York Harbor to Riverdale without change. Howells tells us that Clemens gave his strictest personal attention to the arrangement of these details, and that they absorbed him.

There was no particular of the business which he did not scrutinize and master. . . . With the inertness that grows upon an aging man he had been used to delegate more and more things, but of that thing I perceived that he would not delegate the least detail.

They made the journey on the 16th, in nine and a half hours. With the exception of the natural weariness due to such a trip, the invalid was apparently no worse on their arrival. The stout English butler carried her to her room. It would be many months before she would leave it again. In one of his memoranda Clemens wrote:

Our dear prisoner is where she is through overwork—day & night devotion to the children & me. We did not know how to value it. We know now.

And in a notation, on a letter praising him for what he had done for the world's enjoyment, and for his splendid triumph over debt, he said:

Livy never gets her share of these applauses, but it is because the people do not know. Yet she is entitled to the lion's share.

He wrote Twichell at the end of October:

Livy drags along drearily. It must be hard times for that turbulent spirit. It will be a long time before she is on her feet again. It is a most pathetic case. I wish I could transfer

it to myself. Between ripping & raging & smoking & reading I could get a good deal of holiday out of it. Clara runs the house smoothly & capitally.

Heavy as was the cloud of illness, he could not help pestering Twichell a little about a recent mishap—a sprained shoulder:

I should like to know how & where it happened. In the pulpit, as like as not, otherwise you would not be taking so much pains to conceal it. This is not a malicious suggestion, & not a personally invented one: you told me yourself once that you threw artificial power & impressiveness in your sermons where needed by "banging the Bible"—(your own words). You have reached a time of life when it is not wise to take these risks. You would better jump around. We all have to change our methods as the infirmities of age creep upon us. Jumping around will be impressive now, whereas before you were gray it would have excited remark.

Mrs. Clemens seemed to improve as the weeks passed, and they had great hopes of her complete recovery. Clemens took up some work—a new Huck Finn story, inspired by his trip to Hannibal. It was to have two parts—Huck and Tom in youth, and then their return in old age. He did some chapters quite in the old vein, and wrote to Howells of his plan. Howells answered:

It is a great lay-out: what I shall enjoy most will be the return of the old fellows to the scene and their tall lying. There is a matchless chance there. I suppose you will put in plenty of pegs in this prefatory part.

But the new story did not reach completion. Huck and Tom would not come back, even to go over the old scenes.

CCXXIV

THE SIXTY-SEVENTH BIRTHDAY DINNER

IT was on the evening of the 27th of November, 1902, at the Metropolitan Club, New York City, that Col. George Harvey, president of the Harper Company, gave Mark Twain a dinner in celebration of his sixty-seventh birthday. The actual date fell three days later; but that would bring it on Sunday, and to give it on Saturday night would be more than likely to carry it into Sabbath morning, and so the 27th was chosen. Colonel Harvey himself presided, and Howells led the speakers with a poem, "A Double-Barreled Sonnet to Mark Twain," which closed:

> Still, to have everything beyond cavil right,
> We will dine with you here till Sunday night.

Thomas Brackett Reed followed with what proved to be the last speech he would ever make, as it was also one of his best. All the speakers did well that night, and they included some of the country's foremost in oratory: Chauncey Depew, St. Clair McKelway, Hamilton Mabie, and Wayne MacVeagh. Dr. Henry van Dyke and John Kendrick Bangs read poems. The chairman constantly kept the occasion from becoming too serious by maintaining an attitude of "thinking ambassador" for the guest of the evening, gently pushing Clemens back in his seat when he attempted to rise and expressing for him an opinion of each of the various tributes.

"The limit has been reached," he announced at the

close of Dr. van Dyke's poem. "More that is better could not be said. Gentlemen, Mr. Clemens."

It is seldom that Mark Twain has made a better after-dinner speech than he delivered then. He was surrounded by some of the best minds of the nation, men assembled to do him honor. They expected much of him—to Mark Twain always an inspiring circumstance. He was greeted with cheers and hand-clapping that came volley after volley, and seemed never ready to end. When it had died away at last he stood waiting a little in the stillness for his voice; then he said, "I think I ought to be allowed to talk as long as I want to," and again the storm broke.

It is a speech not easy to abridge—a finished and perfect piece of after-dinner eloquence,[1] full of humorous stories and moving references to old friends—to Hay, and Reed, and Twichell, and Howells, and Rogers, the friends he had known so long and loved so well. He told of his recent trip to his boyhood home, and how he had stood with John Briggs on Holliday's Hill and they had pointed out the haunts of their youth. Then at the end he paid a tribute to the companion of his home, who could not be there to share his evening's triumph. This peroration —a beautiful heart-offering to her and to those that had shared in long friendship—demands admission:

> Now, there is one invisible guest here. A part of me is not present; the larger part, the better part, is yonder at her home; that is my wife, and she has a good many personal friends here, and I think it won't distress any one of them to know that, although she is going to be confined to her bed for many months to come from that nervous prostration, there is not any danger and she is coming along very well—and I think it quite appropriate that I should speak of her. I knew her for the first time just in the same year that I first knew John Hay and

[1] The "Sixty-seventh Birthday Speech" entire is included in the volume *Mark Twain's Speeches*.

Tom Reed and Mr. Twichell—thirty-six years ago—and she has been the best friend I have ever had, and that is saying a good deal—she has reared me—she and Twichell together—and what I am I owe to them. Twichell—why, it is such a pleasure to look upon Twichell's face! For five and twenty years I was under the Rev. Mr. Twichell's tuition, I was in his pastorate occupying a pew in his church and held him in due reverence. That man is full of all the graces that go to make a person companionable and beloved; and wherever Twichell goes to start a church the people flock there to buy the land; they find real estate goes up all around the spot, and the envious and the thoughtful always try to get Twichell to move to their neighborhood and start a church; and wherever you see him go you can go and buy land there with confidence, feeling sure that there will be a double price for you before very long.

I have tried to do good in this world, and it is marvelous in how many different ways I have done good, and it is comfortable to reflect—now, there's Mr. Rogers—just out of the affection I bear that man many a time I have given him points in finance that he had never thought of—and if he could lay aside envy, prejudice, and superstition, and utilize those ideas in his business, it would make a difference in his bank-account.

Well, I liked the poetry. I liked all the speeches and the poetry, too. I liked Dr. van Dyke's poem. I wish I could return thanks in proper measure to you, gentlemen, who have spoken and violated your feelings to pay me compliments; some were merited and some you overlooked, it is true; and Colonel Harvey did slander every one of you, and put things into my mouth that I never said, never thought of at all.

And now my wife and I, out of our single heart, return you our deepest and most grateful thanks, and—yesterday was her birthday.

The sixty-seventh birthday dinner was widely celebrated by the press, and newspaper men generally took occasion to pay brilliant compliments to Mark Twain. Arthur Brisbane wrote editorially:

For more than a generation he has been the Messiah of a genuine gladness and joy to the millions of three continents.

It was little more than a week later that one of the old friends he had mentioned, Thomas Brackett Reed, apparently well and strong that birthday evening, passed from the things of this world. Clemens felt his death keenly, and in a "good-by" which he wrote for *Harper's Weekly* he said:

His was a nature which invited affection—compelled it, in fact—and met it half-way. Hence, he was "Tom" to the most of his friends and to half of the nation. . . .

I cannot remember back to a time when he was not "Tom" Reed to me, nor to a time when he could have been offended at being so addressed by me. I cannot remember back to a time when I could let him alone in an after-dinner speech if he was present, nor to a time when he did not take my extravagance concerning him and misstatements about him in good part, nor yet to a time when he did not pay them back with usury when his turn came. The last speech he made was at my birthday dinner at the end of November, when naturally I was his text; my last word to him was in a letter the next day; a day later I was illustrating a fantastic article on art with his portrait among others—a portrait now to be laid reverently away among the jests that begin in humor and end in pathos. These things happened only eight days ago, and now he is gone from us, and the nation is speaking of him as one who was. It seems incredible, impossible. Such a man, such a friend, seems to us a permanent possession; his vanishing from our midst is unthinkable, as was the vanishing of the Campanile, that had stood for a thousand years and was turned to dust in a moment.

The appreciation closes:

I have only wished to say how fine and beautiful was his life and character, and to take him by the hand and say good-by, as to a fortunate friend who has done well his work and goes a pleasant journey.

CCXXV

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CONTROVERSIES

THE *North American Review* for December (1902) contained an instalment of the Christian Science series which Mark Twain had written in Vienna several years before. He had renewed his interest in the doctrine, and his admiration for Mrs. Eddy's peculiar abilities and his antagonism toward her had augmented in the mean time. Howells refers to the "mighty moment when Clemens was building his engines of war for the destruction of Christian Science, which superstition nobody, and he least of all, expected to destroy":

> He believed that as a religious machine the Christian Science Church was as perfect as the Roman Church, and destined to be more formidable in its control of the minds of men. . . .
>
> An interesting phase of his psychology in this business was not only his admiration for the masterly policy of the Christian Science hierarchy, but his willingness to allow the miracles of its healers to be tried on his friends and family if they wished it. He had a tender heart for the whole generation of empirics, as well as the newer sorts of scienticians, but he seemed to base his faith in them largely upon the failure of the regulars, rather than upon their own successes, which also he believed in. He was recurrently, but not insistently, desirous that you should try their strange magics when you were going to try the familiar medicines.

Clemens never had any quarrel with the theory of Christian Science or mental healing, or with any of the empiric practices. He acknowledged good in all of them,

and he welcomed most of them in preference to *materia medica*. It is true that his animosity for the founder of the Christian Science cult sometimes seems to lap over and fringe the religion itself; but this is apparent rather than real. Furthermore, he frequently expressed a deep obligation which humanity owed to the founder of the faith, in that she had organized a healing element ignorantly and indifferently employed hitherto. His quarrel with Mrs. Eddy lay in the belief that she herself, as he expressed it, was "a very unsound Christian Scientist."

> I believe she has a serious malady—self-edification—and that it will be well to have one of the experts demonstrate over her. [But he added]: Closely examined, painstakingly studied, she is easily the most interesting person on the planet, and in several ways as easily the most extraordinary woman that was ever born upon it.

Necessarily, the forces of Christian Science were aroused by these articles, and there were various replies, among them, one by the founder herself, a moderate rejoinder in her usual literary form.

"Mrs. Eddy in Error," in the *North American Review* for April, 1903, completed what Clemens had to say on the matter for this time.

He was putting together a book on the subject, comprised of his various published papers and some added chapters. It would not be a large volume, and he offered to let his Christian Science opponents share it with him, stating their side of the case. Mr. William D. McCrackan, one of the church's chief advocates, was among those invited to participate. McCrackan and Clemens, from having begun as enemies, had become quite friendly, and had discussed their differences face to face at considerable length. Early in the controversy Clemens one night wrote McCrackan a pretty savage letter. He threw it

on the hall table for mailing, but later got out of bed and slipped down-stairs to get it. It was too late—the letters had been gathered up and mailed. Next evening a truly Christian note came from McCrackan, returning the hasty letter, which he said he was sure the writer would wish to recall. Their friendship began there. For some reason, however, the collaborated volume did not materialize. In the end, publication was delayed a number of years, by which time Clemens's active interest was a good deal modified, though the practice itself never failed to invite his attention.

Howells refers to his anti-Christian Science rages, which began with the postponement of the book, and these Clemens vented at the time in another manuscript entitled, "Eddypus," an imaginary history of a thousand years hence, when Eddyism should rule the world. By that day its founder would have become a deity, and the calendar would be changed to accord with her birth. It was not publishable matter, and really never intended as such. It was just one of the things which Mark Twain wrote to relieve mental pressure.

CCXXVI

"WAS IT HEAVEN? OR HELL?"

THE Christmas number of *Harper's Magazine* for 1902 contained the story, "Was it Heaven? or Hell?" and it immediately brought a flood of letters to its author from grateful readers on both sides of the ocean. An Englishman wrote: "I want to thank you for writing so pathetic and so profoundly true a story"; and an American declared it to be the best short story ever written. Another letter said:

I have learned to love those maiden liars—love and weep over them—then put them beside Dante's Beatrice in Paradise.

There were plenty of such letters; but there was one of a different sort. It was a letter from a man who had but recently gone through almost precisely the experience narrated in the tale. His dead daughter had even borne the same name—Helen. She had died of typhus while her mother was prostrated with the same malady, and the deception had been maintained in precisely the same way, even to the fictitiously written letters. Clemens replied to this letter, acknowledging the striking nature of the coincidence it related, and added that, had he invented the story, he would have believed it a case of mental telegraphy.

I was merely telling a true story just as it had been told to me by one who well knew the mother and the daughter & all the beautiful & pathetic details. I was living in the house where it

had happened, three years before, & I put it on paper at once while it was fresh in my mind, & its pathos still straining at my heartstrings.

Clemens did not guess that the coincidences were not yet complete, that within a month the drama of the tale would be enacted in his own home. In his note-book, under the date of December 24 (1902), he wrote:

Jean was hit with a chill: Clara was completing her watch in her mother's room and there was no one able to force Jean to go to bed. As a result she is pretty ill to-day—fever & high temperature.

Three days later he added:

It was pneumonia. For 5 days Jean's temperature ranged between 103½ & 104⅖, till this morning, when it got down to 101. She looks like an escaped survivor of a forest fire. For 6 days now my story in the Christmas *Harper's*—"Was it Heaven? or Hell?"—has been enacted in this household. Every day Clara & the nurses have lied about Jean to her mother, describing the fine times she is having outdoors in the winter sports.

That proved a hard, trying winter in the Clemens home, and the burden of it fell chiefly, indeed almost entirely, upon Clara Clemens. Mrs. Clemens became still more frail, and no other member of the family, not even her husband, was allowed to see her for longer than the briefest interval. Yet the patient was all the more anxious to know the news, and daily it had to be prepared—chiefly invented—for her comfort. In an account which Clemens once set down of the "Siege and Season of Unveracity," as he called it, he said:

Clara stood a daily watch of three or four hours, and hers was a hard office indeed. Daily she sealed up in her heart a dozen dangerous truths, and thus saved her mother's life and hope and happiness with holy lies. She had never told her mother a

lie in her life before, and I may almost say that she never told her a truth afterward. It was fortunate for us all that Clara's reputation for truthfulness was so well established in her mother's mind. It was our daily protection from disaster. The mother never doubted Clara's word. Clara could tell her large improbabilities without exciting any suspicion, whereas if I tried to market even a small and simple one the case would have been different. I was never able to get a reputation like Clara's.

Mrs. Clemens questioned Clara every day concerning Jean's health, spirits, clothes, employments, and amusements, and how she was enjoying herself; and Clara furnished the information right along in minute detail—every word of it false, of course. Every day she had to tell how Jean dressed, and in time she got so tired of using Jean's existing clothes over and over again, and trying to get new effects out of them, that finally, as a relief to her hard-worked invention, she got to adding imaginary clothes to Jean's wardrobe, and probably would have doubled it and trebled it if a warning note in her mother's comments had not admonished her that she was spending more money on these spectral gowns and things than the family income justified.

Some portions of detailed accounts of Clara's busy days of this period, as written at the time by Clemens to Twichell and to Mrs. Crane, are eminently worth preserving. To Mrs. Crane:

Clara does not go to her Monday lesson in New York today [her mother having seemed not so well through the night], but forgets that fact and enters her mother's room (where she has no business to be) toward train-time *dressed in a wrapper*.

LIVY. Why, Clara, aren't you going to your lesson?

CLARA (almost caught). Yes.

L. In that costume?

CL. Oh no.

L. Well, you can't make your train; it's impossible.

CL. I know, but I'm going to take the other one.

L. Indeed *that* won't do—you'll be ever so much too late for your lesson.

CL. No, the lesson-time has been put an hour later.

L. (satisfied, then suddenly). But, Clara, that train and the late lesson together will make you late to Mrs. Hapgood's luncheon.

CL. No, the train leaves fifteen minutes earlier than it used to.

L. (satisfied). Tell Mrs. Hapgood, etc., etc., etc. (which Clara promises to do). Clara, dear, after the luncheon—I hate to put this on you—but could you do two or three little shopping-errands for me?

CL. Oh, it won't trouble me a bit—I can do it. (Takes a list of the things she is to buy—a list which she will presently hand to another.)

At 3 or 4 P.M. Clara takes the things brought from New York, studies over her part a little, then goes to her mother's room.

LIVY. It's very good of you, dear. Of course, if I had known it was going to be so snowy and drizzly and sloppy I wouldn't have asked you to buy them. Did you get wet?

CL. Oh, nothing to hurt.

L. You took a cab both ways?

CL. Not from the station to the lesson—the weather was good enough till that was over.

L. Well, now, tell me everything Mrs. Hapgood said.

Clara tells her a long yarn—avoiding novelties and surprises and anything likely to inspire questions difficult to answer; and of course detailing the menu, for if it had been the feeding of the 5,000 Livy would have insisted on knowing what kind of bread it was and how the fishes were served. By and by, while talking of something else:

LIVY. Clams!—in the end of December. Are you sure it was clams?

CL. I didn't say cl— I meant Blue Points.

L. (tranquilized). It seemed odd. What is Jean doing?

CL. She said she was going to do a little typewriting.

L. Has she been out to-day?

CL. Only a moment, right after luncheon. She was determined to go out again, but—

L. How did you know she was out?

CL. (saving herself in time). Katie told me. She was determined to go out again in the rain and snow, but I persuaded her to stay in.

L. (with moving and grateful admiration). Clara, you are

wonderful! the wise watch you keep over Jean, and the influence you have over her; it's so lovely of you, and I tied here and can't take care of her myself. (And she goes on with these undeserved praises till Clara is expiring with shame.)

To Twichell:

I am to see Livy a moment every afternoon until she has another bad night; and I stand in dread, for with all my practice I realize that in a sudden emergency I am but a poor, clumsy liar, whereas a fine alert and capable emergency liar is the only sort that is worth anything in a sick-chamber.

Now, Joe, just see what reputation can do. All Clara's life she has told Livy the truth and now the reward comes; Clara lies to her three and a half hours every day, and Livy takes it all at par, whereas even when I tell her a truth it isn't worth much without corroboration. . . .

Soon my brief visit is due. I've just been up listening at Livy's door.

5 P.M. A great disappointment. I was sitting outside Livy's door waiting. Clara came out a minute ago and said Livy is not so well, and the nurse can't let me see her to-day.

That pathetic drama was to continue in some degree for many a long month. All that winter and spring Mrs. Clemens kept but a frail hold on life. Clemens wrote little, and refused invitations everywhere he could. He spent his time largely in waiting for the two-minute period each day when he could stand at the bed-foot and say a few words to the invalid, and he confined his writing mainly to the comforting, affectionate messages which he was allowed to push under her door. He was always waiting there long before the moment he was permitted to enter. Her illness and her helplessness made manifest what Howells has fittingly characterized as his "beautiful and tender loyalty to her, which was the most moving quality of his most faithful soul."

CCXXVII

THE SECOND RIVERDALE WINTER

MOST of Mark Twain's stories have been dramatized at one time or another, and with more or less success. He had two plays going that winter, one of them the little "Death Disk," which in story form had appeared a year before in *Harper's Magazine*. It was put on at the Carnegie Lyceum with considerable effect, but it was not of sufficient importance to warrant a long continuance.

Another play of that year was a dramatization of *Huckleberry Finn*, by Lee Arthur. This was played with a good deal of success in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, the receipts ranging from three hundred to twenty-one hundred dollars per night, according to the weather and locality. Why the play was discontinued is not altogether apparent; certainly many a dramatic enterprise has gone further, faring worse.

Huck in book form also had been having adventures a little earlier, in being tabooed on account of his morals by certain librarians of Denver and Omaha. It was years since Huck had been in trouble of that sort, and he acquired a good deal of newspaper notoriety in consequence.

Certain entries in Mark Twain's note-book reveal somewhat of his life and thought at this period. We find such entries as this:

Saturday, January 3, 1903. The offspring of riches: Pride, vanity, ostentation, arrogance, tyranny.

Sunday, January 4, 1903. The offspring of poverty: Greed, sordidness, envy, hate, malice, cruelty, meanness, lying, shirking, cheating, stealing, murder.

Monday, February 2, 1903. 33d wedding anniversary. I was allowed to see Livy 5 minutes this morning in honor of the day. She makes but little progress toward recovery, still there is certainly some, we are sure.

Sunday, March 1, 1903. We may not doubt that society in heaven consists mainly of undesirable persons.

Thursday, March 19, 1903. Susy's birthday. She would be 31 now.

The family illnesses, which presently included an allotment for himself, his old bronchitis, made him rage more than ever at the imperfections of the species which could be subject to such a variety of ills. Once he wrote:

Man was made at the end of the week's work when God was tired.

And again:

Adam, man's benefactor—he gave him all that he has ever received that was worth having—death.

The Riverdale home was in reality little more than a hospital that spring. Jean had scarcely recovered her physical strength when she was attacked by measles, and Clara also fell a victim to the infection. Fortunately Mrs. Clemens's health had somewhat improved.

It was during this period that Clemens formulated his eclectic therapeutic doctrine. Writing to Twichell April 4, 1903, he said:

Livy does make a little progress these past 3 or 4 days, progress which is visible to even the untrained eye. The physicians are doing good work for her, but *my* notion is, that no art of healing is the best for *all* ills. I should distribute the ailments around: surgery cases to the surgeon; lupus to the actinic-ray specialist; nervous prostration to the Christian Scientist; most ills to the allopath & the homeopath; & (in my own particular case) rheumatism, gout, & bronchial attack to the osteopathist.

He had plenty of time to think and to read during those weeks of confinement, and to rage, and to write when he felt the need of that expression, though he appears to have completed not much for print beyond his reply to Mrs. Eddy, already mentioned, and his burlesque, "Instructions in Art," with pictures by himself, published in the *Metropolitan* for April and May.

Howells called his attention to some military outrages in the Philippines, citing a case where a certain lieutenant[1] had tortured one of his men, a mild offender, to death out of pure deviltry, and had been tried but not punished for his fiendish crime.

Clemens undertook to give expression to his feelings on this subject, but he boiled so when he touched pen to paper to write of it that it was simply impossible for him to say anything within the bounds of print. Then his only relief was to rise and walk the floor, and curse out his fury at the race that had produced such a specimen.

Mrs. Clemens, who perhaps got some drift or the echo of these tempests, now and then sent him a little admonitory, affectionate note.

Among the books that Clemens read, or tried to read, during his confinement were certain of the novels of Sir Walter Scott. He had never been able to admire Scott, and determined now to try to understand this author's popularity and his standing with the critics; but after wading through the first volume of one novel, and beginning another one, he concluded to apply to one who

[1] The torture to death of Private Edward C. Richter, an American soldier, by orders of a commissioned officer of the United States army on the night of February 7, 1902. Private Richter was bound and gagged and the gag held in his mouth by means of a club while ice-water was slowly poured into his face, a dipper full at a time, for two hours and a half, until life became extinct.

could speak as having authority. He wrote to Brander Matthews:

DEAR BRANDER,—I haven't been out of my bed for 4 weeks, but—well, I have been reading a good deal, & it occurs to me to ask you to sit down, some time or other when you have 8 or 9 months to spare, & jot me down a certain few literary particulars for my help & elevation. Your time need not be thrown away, for at your further leisure you can make Columbian lectures out of the results & do your students a good turn.

1. Are there in Sir Walter's novels passages done in *good* English—English which is neither slovenly nor involved?

2. Are there passages whose English is not poor & thin & commonplace, but is of a quality above that?

3. Are there passages which burn with real fire—not punk, fox-fire, make-believe?

4. Has he heroes & heroines who are not cads and cadesses?

5. Has he personages whose acts & talk correspond with their characters as described by him?

6. Has he heroes & heroines whom the reader admires—admires and knows *why?*

7. Has he funny characters that are funny, and humorous passages that are humorous?

8. Does he ever chain the reader's interest & make him reluctant to lay the book down?

9. Are there pages where he ceases from posing, ceases from admiring the placid flood & flow of his own dilution, ceases from being artificial, & is for a time, long or short, recognizably sincere & in earnest?

10. Did he know how to write English, & didn't do it because he didn't want to?

11. Did he use the right word only when he couldn't think of another one, or did he run so much to wrong words because he didn't know the right one when he saw it?

12. Can you read him and keep your respect for him? Of course a person could in *his* day—an era of sentimentality & sloppy romantics—but land! can a body do it to-day?

Brander, I lie here dying, slowly dying, under the blight of Sir Walter. I have read the first volume of *Rob Roy*, & as far as Chapter XIX of *Guy Mannering*, & I can no longer hold my

head up or take my nourishment. Lord, it's all so juvenile! so artificial, so shoddy; & *such* wax figures & skeletons & specters. Interest? Why, it is impossible to feel an interest in these bloodless shams, these milk-&-water humbugs. And oh, the poverty of invention! Not poverty in inventing situations, but poverty in furnishing reasons for them. Sir Walter usually gives himself away when he arranges for a situation—elaborates & elaborates & elaborates till, if you live to get to it, you don't believe in it when it happens.

I can't find the rest of *Rob Roy*, I can't stand any more *Mannering*—I do not know just what to do, but I will reflect, & not quit this great study rashly. . . .

My, I wish I could see you & Leigh Hunt!

Sincerely yours,

S. L. Clemens.

But a few days later he experienced a revelation. It came when he perseveringly attacked still a third work of Scott—*Quentin Durward*. Hastily he wrote to Matthews again:

I'm still in bed, but the days have lost their dullness since I broke into Sir Walter & lost my temper. I finished *Guy Mannering*—that curious, curious book, with its mob of squalid shadows gibbering around a single flesh-&-blood being—Dinmont; a book crazily put together out of the very refuse of the romance artist's stage properties—finished it & took up *Quentin Durward* & finished that.

It was like leaving the dead to mingle with the living; it was like withdrawing from the infant class in the college of journalism to sit under the lectures in English literature in Columbia University.

I wonder who wrote *Quentin Durward?* [1]

Among other books which he read that winter and spring was Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life*, then

[1] This letter, enveloped, addressed, and stamped, was evidently mislaid. It was found and mailed seven years later, June, 1910—a message from the dead.

recently published. That he finished it in a mood of sweet gentleness we gather from a long, lovely letter which he wrote her—a letter in which he said:

I am charmed with your book—enchanted. You are a wonderful creature, the most wonderful in the world—you and your other half together—Miss Sullivan, I mean—for it took the pair of you to make a complete & perfect whole. How she stands out in her letters! her brilliancy, penetration, originality, wisdom, character, & the fine literary competencies of her pen—they are all there.

When reading and writing failed as diversion, Mark Twain often turned to mathematics. With no special talent for accuracy in the matter of figures, he had a curious fondness for calculations, scientific and financial, and he used to cover pages, ciphering at one thing and another, arriving pretty inevitably at the wrong results. When the problem was financial, and had to do with his own fortunes, his figures were as likely as not to leave him in a state of panic. The expenditures were naturally heavy that spring; and one night, when he had nothing better to do, he figured the relative proportion to his income. The result showed that they were headed straight for financial ruin. He put in the rest of the night fearfully rolling and tossing, and reconstructing his figures that grew always worse, and next morning summoned Jean and Clara and petrified them with the announcement that the cost of living was one hundred and twenty-five per cent. more than the money-supply.

Writing to MacAlister three days later he said:

It was a mistake. When I came down in the morning, a gray and aged wreck, I found that in some unaccountable way (unaccountable to a business man, but not to me) I had multiplied the totals by two. By God, I dropped seventy-five years on the floor where I stood!

Do you know it affected me as one is affected when one wakes out of a hideous dream & finds it was only a dream. It was a great comfort & satisfaction to me to call the daughters to a private meeting of the board again. Certainly there is a blistering & awful reality about a well-arranged unreality. It is quite within the possibilities that two or three nights like that of mine would drive a man to suicide. He would refuse to examine the figures, they would revolt him so, & he would go to his death unaware that there was nothing serious about them. I cannot get that night out of my head, it was so vivid, so real, so ghastly. In any other year of these thirty-three the relief would have been simple: go where you can, cut your cloth to fit your income. You can't do that when your wife *can't* be moved, even from one room to the next.

The doctor & a specialist met in conspiracy five days ago, & in their belief she will by and by come out of this as good as new, substantially. They ordered her to Italy for next winter—which seems to indicate that by autumn she will be able to undertake the voyage. So Clara is writing to a Florence friend to take a look around among the villas for us in the regions near that city.

CCXXVIII

PROFFERED HONORS

MARK TWAIN had been at home well on toward three years; but his popularity showed no signs of diminishing. So far from having waned, it had surged to a higher point than ever before. His crusade against public and private abuses had stirred readers, and had set them to thinking; the news of illness in his household; a report that he was contemplating another residence abroad —these things moved deeply the public heart, and a tide of letters flowed in, letters of every sort—of sympathy, of love, or hearty indorsement, whatever his attitude of reform.

When a writer in a New York newspaper said, "Let us go outside the realm of practical politics next time in choosing our candidates for the Presidency," and asked, "Who is our ablest and most conspicuous private citizen?" another editorial writer, Joseph Hollister, replied that Mark Twain was "the greatest man of his day in private life, and entitled to the fullest measure of recognition."

But Clemens was without political ambitions. He knew the way of such things too well. When Hollister sent him the editorial he replied only with a word of thanks, and did not, even in jest, encourage that tiny seed of a Presidential boom. One would like to publish many of the beautiful letters received during this period, for they are beautiful, most of them, however illiterate in form, however discouraging in length—beautiful in that they overflow with the writers' sincerity and gratitude.

So many of them came from children, usually without the hope of a reply, some signed only with initials, that the writers might not be open to the suspicion of being seekers for his autograph. Almost more than any other reward, Mark Twain valued this love of the children.

A department in the *St. Nicholas Magazine* offered a prize for a caricature drawing of some well-known man. There were one or two of certain prominent politicians and capitalists, and there was literally a wheelbarrow load of Mark Twain. When he was informed of this he wrote:

"No tribute could have pleased me more than that—the friendship of the children."

Tributes came to him in many forms. In his native State it was proposed to form a Mark Twain Association, with headquarters at Hannibal, with the immediate purpose of having a week set apart at the St. Louis World's Fair, to be called the Mark Twain week, with a special Mark Twain day, on which a national literary convention would be held. But when his consent was asked, and his co-operation invited, he wrote characteristically:

It is indeed a high compliment which you offer me, in naming an association after me and in proposing the setting apart of a Mark Twain day at the great St. Louis Fair, but such compliments are not proper for the living; they are proper and safe for the dead only. I value the impulse which moves you to tender me these honors. I value it as highly as any one can, and am grateful for it, but I should stand in a sort of terror of the honors themselves. So long as we remain alive we are not safe from doing things which, however righteously and honorably intended, can wreck our repute and extinguish our friendships.

I hope that no society will be named for me while I am still alive, for I might at some time or other do something which would cause its members to regret having done me that honor. After I shall have joined the dead I shall follow the custom of those

people, and be guilty of no conduct that can wound any friend; but until that time shall come I shall be a doubtful quantity, like the rest of our race.

The committee, still hoping for his consent, again appealed to him. But again he wrote:

While I am deeply touched by the desire of my friends of Hannibal to confer these great honors upon me I must still forbear to accept them. Spontaneous and unpremeditated honors, like those which came to me at Hannibal, Columbia, St. Louis, and at the village stations all down the line, are beyond all price and are a treasure for life in the memory, for they are a free gift out of the heart and they come without solicitation; but I am a Missourian, and so I shrink from distinctions which have to be arranged beforehand and with my privity, for I then become a party to my own exalting. I am humanly fond of honors that happen, but chary of those that come by canvass and intention.

Somewhat later he suggested a different feature for the fair; one that was not practical, perhaps, but which certainly would have aroused interest—that is to say, an old-fashioned six-day steamboat-race from New Orleans to St. Louis, with the old-fashioned accessories, such as torch-baskets, forecastle crowds of negro singers, with a negro on the safety-valve. In his letter to President Francis he said:

As to particulars, I think that the race should be a genuine reproduction of the old-time race, not just an imitation of it, and that it should cover the whole course. I think the boats should begin the trip at New Orleans, and side by side (not an interval between), and end it at North St. Louis, a mile or two above the Big Mound.

In a subsequent letter to Governor Francis he wrote:

It has been a dear wish of mine to exhibit myself at the great Fair & get a prize, but circumstances beyond my control have interfered. . . .

I suppose you will get a prize, because you have created the most prodigious Fair the planet has ever seen. Very well, you have indeed earned it, and with it the gratitude of the State and the nation.

Newspaper men used every inducement to get interviews from him. They invited him to name a price for any time he could give them, long or short. One reporter offered him five hundred dollars for a two-hour talk. Another proposed to pay him one hundred dollars a week for a quarter of a day each week, allowing him to discuss any subject he pleased. One wrote asking him two questions: the first, "Your favorite method of escaping from Indians"; the second, "Your favorite method of escaping capture by the Indians when they were in pursuit of you." They inquired as to his favorite copy-book maxim; as to what he considered most important to a young man's success; his definition of a gentleman. They wished to know his plan for the settlement of labor troubles. But they did not awaken his interest, or his cupidity. To one applicant he wrote:

No, there are temptations against which we are fire-proof. Your proposition is one which comes to me with considerable frequency, but it never tempts me. The price isn't the objection; you offer plenty. It is the nature of the work that is the objection—a kind of work which I could not do well enough to satisfy me. To multiply the price by twenty would not enable me to do the work to my satisfaction, & by consequence would make no impression upon me.

Once he allowed himself to be interviewed for the *Herald*, when from Mr. Rogers's yacht he had watched Sir Thomas Lipton's *Shamrock* go down to defeat; but this was a subject which appealed to him—a kind of hot-weather subject—and he could be as light-minded about it as he chose.

CCXXIX

THE LAST SUMMER AT ELMIRA

THE Clemenses were preparing to take up residence in Florence, Italy. The Hartford house had been sold in May, ending forever the association with the city that so long had been a part of their lives. The Tarrytown place, which they had never occupied, they also agreed to sell, for it was the belief now that Mrs. Clemens's health would never greatly prosper there. Howells says, or at least implies, that they expected their removal to Florence to be final. He tells us, too, of one sunny afternoon when he and Clemens sat on the grass before the mansion at Riverdale, after Mrs. Clemens had somewhat improved, and how they "looked up toward a balcony where by and by that lovely presence made itself visible, as if it had stooped there from a cloud. A hand frailly waved a handkerchief; Clemens ran over the lawn toward it, calling tenderly." It was a greeting to Howells —the last he would ever receive from her.

Mrs. Clemens was able to make a trip to Elmira by the end of June, and on the 1st of July Mr. Rogers brought Clemens and his wife down the river on his yacht to the Lackawanna pier, and they reached Quarry Farm that evening. She improved in the quietude and restfulness of that beloved place. Three weeks later Clemens wrote to Twichell:

> Livy is coming along: eats well, sleeps some, is mostly very gay, not very often depressed; spends all day on the porch, sleeps there a part of the night; makes excursions in carriage

& in wheel-chair; &, in the matter of superintending everything & everybody, has resumed business at the old stand.

During three peaceful months she spent most of her days reclining on the wide veranda, surrounded by those dearest to her, and looking out on the dreamlike landscape—the long, grassy slope, the drowsy city, and the distant hills—getting strength for the far journey by sea. Clemens did some writing, occupying the old octagonal study—shut in now and overgrown with vines—where during the thirty years since it was built so many of his stories had been written. *A Dog's Tale*—that pathetic anti-vivisection story—appears to have been the last manuscript ever completed in the spot consecrated by Huck and Tom, and by Tom Canty the Pauper and the little wandering Prince.

It was October 5th when they left Elmira. Two days earlier Clemens had written in his note-book:

To-day I placed flowers on Susy's grave—for the last time probably—& read words

"Good-night, dear heart, good-night."

They did not return to Riverdale, but went to the Hotel Grosvenor for the intervening weeks. They had engaged passage for Italy on the *Princess Irene*, which would sail on the 24th. It was during the period of their waiting that Clemens concluded his final Harper contract. On that day, in his note-book, he wrote:

THE PROPHECY

In 1895 Cheiro the palmist examined my hand & said that in my 68th year (1903) I would become suddenly rich. I was a bankrupt & $94,000 in debt at the time through the failure of Charles L. Webster & Co. Two years later—in London—Cheiro repeated this long-distance prediction, & added that

the riches would come from a quite unexpected source. I am superstitious. I kept the prediction in mind & often thought of it. When at last it came true, October 22, 1903, there was but a month & 9 days to spare.

The contract signed that day concentrates all my books in Harper's hands & now at last they are valuable; in fact they are a fortune. They *guarantee* me $25,000 a year for 5 years, and they will yield twice as much as that.[1]

During the conclusion of this contract Clemens made frequent visits to Fairhaven on the *Kanawha*. Joe Goodman came from the Pacific to pay him a good-by visit during this period. Goodman had translated the Mayan inscriptions, and his work had received recognition and publication by a group of British scientists. It was a fine achievement for a man in later life and Clemens admired it immensely. Goodman and Clemens enjoyed each other in the old way at quiet resorts where they could talk over the old tales. Another visitor of that summer was the son of an old friend, a Hannibal printer named Daulton. Young Daulton came with manuscripts seeking a hearing of the magazine editors, so Clemens wrote a letter which would insure that favor:

INTRODUCING MR. GEO. DAULTON

To GILDER, ALDEN, HARVEY, MCCLURE, WALKER, PAGE, BOK, COLLIER, and such other members of the sacred guild as privilege me to call them friends—these:

Although I have no personal knowledge of the bearer of this, I have what is better: He comes recommended to me by his own father—a thing not likely to happen in any of your families, I reckon. I ask you, as a favor to me, to waive prejudice &

[1] In earlier note-books and letters Clemens more than once refers to this prophecy and wonders if it is to be realized. The Harper contract, which brought all of his books into the hands of one publisher (negotiated for him by Mr. Rogers), proved, in fact, a fortune. The books yielded always more than the guarantee; sometimes twice that amount, as he had foreseen.

superstition for this once & examine his work with an eye to its literary merit, instead of to the chastity of its spelling. I wish to God you cared less for that particular.

I set (or sat) type alongside of his father, in Hannibal, more than 50 years ago, when none but the pure in heart were in that business. A true man he was; and if I can be of any service to his son—and to you at the same time, let me hope—I am here heartily to try.

Yours by the sanctions of time & deserving,

Sincerely,

S. L. CLEMENS.

Among the kindly words which came to Mark Twain before leaving America was this one which Rudyard Kipling had written to his publisher, Frank Doubleday:

I love to think of the great and godlike Clemens. He is the biggest man you have on your side of the water by a damn sight, and don't you forget it. Cervantes was a relation of his.

It curiously happened that Clemens at the same moment was writing to Doubleday about Kipling:

I have been reading "The Bell Buoy" and "The Old Man" over and over again—my custom with Kipling's work—and saving up the rest for other leisurely and luxurious meals. A bell-buoy is a deeply impressive fellow-being. In these many recent trips up and down the Sound in the *Kanawha* he has talked to me nightly sometimes in his pathetic and melancholy way, sometimes with his strenuous and urgent note, and I got his meaning—now I have his words! No one but Kipling could do this strong and vivid thing. Some day I hope to hear the poem chanted or sung—with the bell-buoy breaking in out of the distance.

P. S.—Your letter has arrived. It makes me proud and glad—what Kipling says. I hope Fate will fetch him to Florence while we are there. I would rather see him than any other man.

CCXXX

THE RETURN TO FLORENCE

From the note-book:

Saturday, October 24, 1903. Sailed in the *Princess Irene* for Genoa at 11. Flowers & fruit from Mrs. Rogers & Mrs. Coe. We have with us Katie Leary (in our domestic service 23 years) & Miss Margaret Sherry (trained nurse).

Two days later he wrote:

Heavy storm all night. Only 3 stewardesses. Ours served 60 meals in rooms this morning.

On the 27th:

Livy is enduring the voyage marvelously well. As well as Clara & Jean, I think, & far better than the trained nurse. She has been out on deck an hour.

November 2. Due at Gibraltar 10 days from New York. 3 days to Naples, then 1 day to Genoa.

At supper the band played "Cavalleria Rusticana," which is forever associated in my mind with Susy. I love it better than any other, but it breaks my heart.

It was the "Intermezzo" he referred to, which had been Susy's favorite music, and whenever he heard it he remembered always one particular opera-night long ago, and Susy's face rose before him.

They were in Naples on the 5th; thence to Genoa, and to Florence, where presently they were installed in

the Villa Reale di Quarto, a fine old Italian palace built by Cosimo more than four centuries ago. In later times it has been occupied and altered by royal families of Würtemberg and Russia. Now it was the property of the Countess Massiglia, from whom Clemens had leased it.

They had hoped to secure the Villa Papiniano, under Fiesole, near Professor Fiske, but negotiations for it had fallen through. The Villa Quarto, as it is usually called, was a more pretentious place and as beautifully located, standing as it does in an ancient garden looking out over Florence toward Vallombrosa and the Chianti hills. Yet now in the retrospect, it seems hardly to have been the retreat for an invalid. Its garden was supernaturally beautiful, all that one expects that a garden of Italy should be—such a garden as Maxfield Parrish might dream; but its beauty was that which comes of antiquity —the accumulation of dead years. Its funereal cypresses, its crumbling walls and arches, its clinging ivy and moldering marbles, and a clock that long ago forgot the hours, gave it a mortuary look. In a way it suggested Arnold Böcklin's "Todteninsel," and it might well have served as the allegorical setting for a gateway to the bourne of silence.

The house itself, one of the most picturesque of the old Florentine suburban palaces, was historically interesting, rather than cheerful. The rooms, in number more than sixty, though richly furnished, were vast and barnlike, and there were numbers of them wholly unused and never entered. There was a dearth of the modern improvements which Americans have learned to regard as a necessity, and the plumbing, such as it was, was not always in order. The place was approached by narrow streets, along which the more uninviting aspects of Italy were not infrequent. Youth and health and romance might easily have reveled in the place; but it seems now not to have

been the best choice for that frail invalid, to whom cheer and brightness and freshness and the lovelier things of hope meant always so much.[1] Neither was the climate of Florence all that they had hoped for. Their former sunny winter had misled them. Tradition to the contrary, Italy—or at least Tuscany—is not one perpetual dream of sunlight. It is apt to be damp and cloudy; it is likely to be cold. Writing to MacAlister, Clemens said:

Florentine sunshine? Bless you, there isn't any. We have heavy fogs every morning & rain all day. This house is not merely large, it is vast—therefore I think it must always lack the home feeling.

His dissatisfaction in it began thus early, and it grew as one thing after another went wrong. With it all, however, Mrs. Clemens seemed to gain a little, and was glad to see company—a reasonable amount of company—to brighten her surroundings.

Clemens began to work and wrote a story or two, and those lively articles about the Italian language.

To Twichell he reported progress:

I have a handsome success in one way here. I left New York under a sort of half-promise to furnish to the Harper magazines 30,000 words this year. Magazining is difficult work because every third page represents two pages that you have put in the fire (you are nearly sure to start wrong twice), & so when you have finished an article & are willing to let it go to print it represents only 10 cents a word instead of 30.

But this time I had the curious (& unprecedented) luck to start right in each case. I turned out 37,000 words in 25 working days; & the reason I think I started right every time is, that not only have I approved and accepted the several articles, but the court of last resort (Livy) has done the same.

[1] Villa Quarto has recently been purchased by Signor P. de Ritter Lahony, and thoroughly restored and refreshed and beautified without the sacrifice of any of its romantic features.

On many of the between-days I did some work, but only of an idle & not necessarily necessary sort, since it will not see print until I am dead. I shall continue this (an hour per day), but the rest of the year I expect to put in on a couple of long books (half-completed ones). No more magazine work hanging over my head.

This secluded & silent solitude, this clean, soft air, & this enchanting view of Florence, the great valley & snow-mountains that frame it, are the right conditions for work. They are a persistent inspiration. To-day is very lovely; when the afternoon arrives there will be a new picture every hour till dark, & each of them divine—or progressing from divine to diviner & divinest. On this (second) floor Clara's room commands the finest; she keeps a window ten feet high wide open all the time & frames it in that. I go in from time to time every day & trade sass for a look. The central detail is a distant & stately snow-hump that rises above & behind black-forested hills, & its sloping vast buttresses, velvety & sun-polished, with purple shadows between, make the sort of picture we knew that time we walked in Switzerland in the days of our youth.

From this letter, which is of January 7, 1904, we gather that the weather had greatly improved, and with it Mrs. Clemens's health, notwithstanding she had an alarming attack in December. One of the stories he had finished was "The $30,000 Bequest." The work mentioned, which would not see print until after his death, was a continuation of those autobiographical chapters which for years he had been setting down as the mood seized him.

He experimented with dictation, which he had tried long before with Redpath, and for a time now found it quite to his liking. He dictated some of his copyright memories, and some anecdotes and episodes; but his amanuensis wrote only longhand, which perhaps hampered him, for he tired of it by and by and the dictations were discontinued.

Among these notes there is one elaborate description of the Villa di Quarto, dictated at the end of the winter,

by which time we are not surprised to find he had become much attached to the place. The Italian spring was in the air, and it was his habit to grow fond of his surroundings. Some atmospheric paragraphs of these impressions invite us here:

We are in the extreme south end of the house, if there is any such thing as a south end to a house, whose orientation cannot be determined by me, because I am incompetent in all cases where an object does not point directly north & south. This one slants across between, & is therefore a confusion. This little private parlor is in one of the two corners of what I call the south end of the house. The sun rises in such a way that all the morning it is pouring its light through the 33 glass doors or windows which pierce the side of the house which looks upon the terrace & garden; the rest of the day the light floods this south end of the house, as I call it; at noon the sun is directly above Florence yonder in the distance in the plain, directly across those architectural features which have been so familiar to the world in pictures for some centuries, the Duomo, the Campanile, the Tomb of the Medici, & the beautiful tower of the Palazzo Vecchio; in this position it begins to reveal the secrets of the delicious blue mountains that circle around into the west, for its light discovers, uncovers, & exposes a white snowstorm of villas & cities that you cannot train yourself to have confidence in, they appear & disappear so mysteriously, as if they might not be villas & cities at all, but the ghosts of perished ones of the remote & dim Etruscan times; & late in the afternoon the sun sets down behind those mountains somewhere, at no particular time & at no particular place, so far as I can see.

Again at the end of March he wrote:

Now that we have lived in this house four and a half months my prejudices have fallen away one by one & the place has become very homelike to me. Under certain conditions I should like to go on living in it indefinitely. I should wish the Countess to move out of Italy, out of Europe, out of the planet. I should want her bonded to retire to her place in the next world &

inform me which of the two it was, so that I could arrange for my own hereafter.

Complications with their landlady had begun early, and in time, next to Mrs. Clemens's health, to which it bore such an intimate and vital relation, the indifference of the Countess Massiglia to their needs became the supreme and absorbing concern of life at the villa, and led to continued and almost continuous house-hunting.

Days when the weather permitted, Clemens drove over the hills looking for a villa which he could lease or buy—one with conveniences and just the right elevation and surroundings. There were plenty of villas; but some of them were badly situated as to altitude or view; some were falling to decay, and the search was rather a discouraging one. Still it was not abandoned, and the reports of these excursions furnished new interest and new hope always to the invalid at home.

"Even if we find it," he wrote Howells, "I am afraid it will be months before we can move Mrs. Clemens. Of course it will. But it comforts us to let on that we think otherwise, and these pretensions help to keep hope alive in her."

She had her bad days and her good days, days when it was believed she had passed the turning-point and was traveling the way to recovery; but the good days were always a little less hopeful, the bad days a little more discouraging. On February 22d Clemens wrote in his note-book:

At midnight Livy's pulse went to 192 & there was a collapse. Great alarm. Subcutaneous injection of brandy saved her.

And to MacAlister toward the end of March:

We are having quite perfect weather now & are hoping that it will bring effects for Mrs. Clemens.

But a few days later he added that he was watching the driving rain through the windows, and that it was bad weather for the invalid. "But it will not last," he said.

The invalid improved then, and there was a concert in Florence at which Clara Clemens sang. Clemens in his note-book says:

April 8. Clara's concert was a triumph. Livy woke up & sent for her to tell her all about it, near midnight.

But a day or two later she was worse again—then better. The hearts in that household were as pendulums, swinging always between hope and despair.

One familiar with the Clemens history might well have been filled with forebodings. Already in January a member of the family, Mollie Clemens, Orion's wife, died, news which was kept from Mrs. Clemens, as was the death of Aldrich's son, and that of Sir Henry M. Stanley, both of which occurred that spring.

Indeed, death harvested freely that year among the Clemens friendships. Clemens wrote Twichell:

Yours has just this moment arrived—just as I was finishing a note to poor Lady Stanley. I believe the last country-house visit we paid in England was to Stanley's. Lord! how my friends & acquaintances fall about me now in my gray-headed days! Vereshchagin, Mommsen, Dvorák, Lenbach, & Jókai, all so recently, & now Stanley. I have known Stanley 37 years. Goodness, who is there I haven't known?

CCXXXI

THE CLOSE OF A BEAUTIFUL LIFE

IN one of his notes near the end of April Clemens writes that once more, as at Riverdale, he has been excluded from Mrs. Clemens's room except for the briefest moment at a time. But on May 12th, to R. W. Gilder, he reported:

For two days now we have not been anxious about Mrs. Clemens (*unberufen*). After 20 months of bedridden solitude & bodily misery she all of a sudden ceases to be a pallid, shrunken shadow, & looks bright & young & pretty. She remains what she always was, the most wonderful creature of fortitude, patience, endurance, and recuperative power that ever was. But ah, dear! it won't last; this fiendish malady will play new treacheries upon her, and I shall go back to my prayers again—unutterable from any pulpit!

May 13, A.M. I have just paid one of my pair of permitted 2-minute visits per day to the sick-room. And found what I have learned to expect—retrogression.

There was a day when she was brought out on the terrace in a wheel-chair to see the wonder of the early Italian summer. She had been a prisoner so long that she was almost overcome with the delight of it all—the more so, perhaps, in the feeling that she might so soon be leaving it.

It was on Sunday, the 5th of June, that the end came. Clemens and Jean had driven out to make some calls, and had stopped at a villa which promised to fulfil most of the requirements. They came home full of enthusiasm

concerning it, and Clemens, in his mind, had decided on the purchase. In the corridor Clara said:

"She is better to-day than she has been for three months."

Then quickly, under her breath, "Unberufen," which the others, too, added hastily—superstitiously.

Mrs. Clemens was, in fact, bright and cheerful, and anxious to hear all about the new property which was to become their home. She urged him to sit by her during the dinner-hour and tell her the details; but once, when the sense of her frailties came upon her, she said they must not mind if she could not go very soon, but be content where they were. He remained from half past seven until eight—a forbidden privilege, but permitted because she was so animated, feeling so well. Their talk was as it had been in the old days, and once during it he reproached himself, as he had so often done, and asked forgiveness for the tears he had brought into her life. When he was summoned to go at last he chided himself for remaining so long; but she said there was no harm, and kissed him, saying: "You will come back," and he answered, "Yes, to say good night," meaning at half past nine, as was the permitted custom. He stood a moment at the door throwing kisses to her, and she returning them, her face bright with smiles.

He was so hopeful and happy that it amounted to exaltation. He went to his room at first, then he was moved to do a thing which he had seldom done since Susy died. He went to the piano up-stairs and sang the old jubilee songs that Susy had liked to hear him sing. Jean came in presently, listening. She had not done this before, that he could remember. He sang "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," and "My Lord He Calls Me." He noticed Jean then and stopped, but she asked him to go on.

Mrs. Clemens, in her room, heard the distant music, and said to her attendant:

"He is singing a good-night carol to me."

The music ceased presently, and then a moment later she asked to be lifted up. Almost in that instant life slipped away without a sound.

Clemens, coming to say good night, saw a little group about her bed, Clara and Jean standing as if dazed. He went and bent over and looked into her face, surprised that she did not greet him. He did not suspect what had happened until he heard one of the daughters ask:

"Katie, is it true? Oh, Katie, *is* it true?"

He realized then that she was gone.

In his note-book that night he wrote:

At a quarter past 9 this evening she that was the life of my life passed to the relief & the peace of death after 22 months of unjust & unearned suffering. I first saw her near 37 years ago, & now I have looked upon her face for the last time. Oh, so unexpected! . . . I was full of remorse for things done & said in these 34 years of married life that hurt Livy's heart.

He envied her lying there, so free from it all, with the great peace upon her face. He wrote to Howells and to Twichell, and to Mrs. Crane, those nearest and dearest ones. To Twichell he said:

How sweet she was in death, how young, how beautiful, how like her dear girlish self of thirty years ago, not a gray hair showing! This rejuvenescence was noticeable within two hours after her death; & when I went down again (2.30) it was complete. In all that night & all that day she never noticed my caressing hand—it seemed strange.

To Howells he recalled the closing scene:

I bent over her & looked in her face & I think I spoke—I was surprised & troubled that she did not notice me. Then we understood & our hearts broke. How poor we are to-day!

But how thankful I am that her persecutions are ended! I would not call her back if I could.

To-day, treasured in her worn, old Testament, I found a dear & gentle letter from you dated Far Rockaway, September 13, 1896, about our poor Susy's death. I am tired & old; I wish I were with Livy.

And in a few days:

It would break Livy's heart to see Clara. We excuse ourself from all the friends that call—though, of course, only intimates come. Intimates—but they are not the old, old friends, the friends of the old, old times when we laughed. Shall we ever laugh again? If I could only see a dog that I knew in the old times & could put my arms around his neck and tell him all, everything, & ease my heart!

CCXXXII

THE SAD JOURNEY HOME

A TIDAL wave of sympathy poured in. Noble and commoner, friend and stranger—humanity of every station—sent their messages of condolence to the friend of mankind. The cablegrams came first—bundles of them from every corner of the world—then the letters, a steady inflow. Howells, Twichell, Aldrich—those oldest friends who had themselves learned the meaning of grief—spoke such few and futile words as the language can supply to allay a heart's mourning, each recalling the rarity and beauty of the life that had slipped away. Twichell and his wife wrote:

> DEAR, DEAR MARK,—There is nothing we can say. What is there *to* say? But here we are—with you all every hour and every minute—filled with unutterable thoughts; unutterable affection for the dead and for the living.
>
> HARMONY AND JOE.

Howells in his letter said:

> She hallowed what she touched far beyond priests. . . . What are you going to do, you poor soul?

A hundred letters crowd in for expression here, but must be denied—not, however, the beam of hope out of Helen Keller's illumined night:

> Do try to reach through grief and feel the pressure of her hand, as I reach through darkness and feel the smile on my friends' lips and the light in their eyes though mine are closed.

They were adrift again without plans for the future. They would return to America to lay Mrs. Clemens to rest by Susy and little Langdon, but beyond that they could not see. Then they remembered a quiet spot in Massachusetts, Tyringham, near Lee, where the Gilders lived, and so, on June 7th, he wrote:

DEAR GILDER FAMILY,—I have been worrying and worrying to know what to do; at last I went to the girls with an idea—to ask the Gilders to get us shelter near their summer home. It was the first time they have not shaken their heads. So to-morrow I will cable to you and shall hope to be in time.

An hour ago the best heart that ever beat for me and mine was carried silent out of this house, and I am as one who wanders and has lost his way. She who is gone was our head, she was our hands. We are now trying to make plans—*we:* we who have never made a plan before, nor ever needed to. If she could speak to us she would make it all simple and easy with a word, & our perplexities would vanish away. If she had known she was near to death she would have told us where to go and what to do, but she was not suspecting, neither were we. She was all our riches and she is gone; she was our breath, she was our life, and now we are nothing.

We send you our love—and with it the love of you that was in her heart when she died.

S. L. CLEMENS.

They arranged to sail on the *Prince Oscar* on the 29th of June. There was an earlier steamer, but it was the *Princess Irene*, which had brought them, and they felt they would not make the return voyage on that vessel. During the period of waiting a curious thing happened. Clemens one day got up in a chair in his room on the second floor to pull down the high window-sash. It did not move easily and his hand slipped. It was only by the merest chance that he saved himself from falling to the ground far below. He mentions this in his note-book, and once, speaking of it to Frederick Duneka, he said:

"Had I fallen it would probably have killed me, and in my bereaved circumstances the world would have been convinced that it was suicide. It was one of those curious coincidences which are always happening and being misunderstood."

The homeward voyage and its sorrowful conclusion are pathetically conveyed in his notes:

June 29, 1904. Sailed last night at 10. The bugle-call to breakfast. I recognized the notes and was distressed. When I heard them last Livy heard them with me; now they fall upon her ear unheeded.

In my life there have been 68 Junes—but how vague & colorless 67 of them are contrasted with the deep blackness of this one!

July 1, 1904. I cannot reproduce Livy's face in my mind's eye—I was never in my life able to reproduce a face. It is a curious infirmity—& now at last I realize it is a calamity.

July 2, 1904. In these 34 years we have made many voyages together, Livy dear—& now we are making our last; you down below & lonely; I above with the crowd & lonely.

July 3, 1904. Ship-time, 8 A.M. In 13 hours & a quarter it will be 4 weeks since Livy died.

Thirty-one years ago we made our first voyage together—& this is our last one in company. Susy was a year old then. She died at 24 & had been in her grave 8 years.

July 10, 1904. To-night it will be 5 weeks. But to me it remains yesterday—as it has from the first. But this funeral march—how sad & long it is!

Two days more will end the second stage of it.

July 14, 1904 (ELMIRA). Funeral private in the house of Livy's young maidenhood. Where she stood as a bride 34 years ago there her coffin rested; & over it the same voice that had made her a wife then committed her departed spirit to God now.

It was Joseph Twichell who rendered that last service. Mr. Beecher was long since dead. It was a simple, touching utterance, closing with this tender word of farewell:

THE SAD JOURNEY HOME

Robert Browning, when he was nearing the end of his earthly days, said that death was the thing that we did not believe in. Nor do we believe in it. We who journeyed through the bygone years in companionship with the bright spirit now withdrawn are growing old. The way behind is long; the way before is short. The end cannot be far off. But what of that? Can we not say, each one:

"So long that power hath blessed me, sure it still
Will lead me on;
O'er moor and fen; o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn, their angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile!"

And so good-by. Good-by, dear heart! Strong, tender, and true. Good-by until for us the morning break and these shadows fly away.

Dr. Samuel E. Eastman, who had succeeded Mr. Beecher, closed the service with a prayer, and so the last office we can render in this life for those we love was finished.

Clemens ordered that a simple marker should be placed at the grave, bearing, besides the name, the record of birth and death, followed by the German line:

Gott sei dir gnädig, O meine Wonne!

CCXXXIII

BEGINNING ANOTHER HOME

THERE was an extra cottage on the Gilder place at Tyringham, and this they occupied for the rest of that sad summer. Clemens, in his note-book, has preserved some of its aspects and incidents.

July 24, 1904. Rain—rain—rain. Cold. We built a fire in my room. Then clawed the logs out & threw water, remembering there was a brood of swallows in the chimney. The tragedy was averted.

July 31. LEE, MASSACHUSETTS (BERKSHIRE HILLS). Last night the young people out on a moonlight ride. Trolley frightened Jean's horse—collision—horse killed. Rodman Gilder picked Jean up, unconscious; she was taken to the doctor, per the car. Face, nose, side, back contused; tendon of left ankle broken.

August 10. NEW YORK. Clara here sick—never well since June 5. Jean is at the summer home in the Berkshire Hills crippled.

The next entry records the third death in the Clemens family within a period of eight months—that of Mrs. Moffett, who had been Pamela Clemens. Clemens writes:

September 1. Died at Greenwich, Connecticut, my sister, Pamela Moffett, aged about 73.

Death dates this year January 14, June 5, September 1.

That fall they took a house in New York City, on the corner of Ninth Street and Fifth Avenue, No. 21,

remaining for a time at the Grosvenor while the new home was being set in order. The home furniture was brought from Hartford, unwrapped, and established in the light of strange environment. Clemens wrote:

> We have not seen it for thirteen years. Katie Leary, our old housekeeper, who has been in our service more than twenty-four years, cried when she told me about it to-day. She said, "I had forgotten it was so beautiful, and it brought Mrs. Clemens right back to me—in that old time when she was so young and lovely."

Clara Clemens had not recovered from the strain of her mother's long illness and the shock of her death, and she was ordered into retirement with the care of a trained nurse. The life at 21 Fifth Avenue, therefore, began with only two remaining members of the broken family—Clemens and Jean.

Clemens had undertaken to divert himself with work at Tyringham, though without much success. He was not well; he was restless and disturbed; his heart bleak with a great loneliness. He prepared an article on Copyright for the *North American Review*,[1] and he began, or at least contemplated, that beautiful fancy, *Eve's Diary*, which in the widest and most reverential sense, from the first word to the last, conveys his love, his worship, and his tenderness for the one he had laid away. Adam's single comment at the end, "Wheresoever she was, *there* was Eden," was his own comment, and is perhaps the most tenderly beautiful line he ever wrote. These two books, *Adam's Diary* and *Eve's*—amusing and sometimes absurd as they are, and so far removed from the literal—are as autobiographic as anything he has done, and one of

[1] Published Jan., 1905. A dialogue presentation of copyright conditions, addressed to Thorwald Stolberg, Register of Copyrights, Washington, D. C. One of the best of Mark Twain's papers on the subject.

them as lovely in its truth. Like the first Maker of men, Mark Twain created Adam in his own image; and his rare Eve is no less the companion with whom, half a lifetime before, he had begun the marriage journey. Only here the likeness ceases. No Serpent ever entered their Eden. And they never left it; it traveled with them so long as they remained together.

In the Christmas *Harper* for 1904 was published "Saint Joan of Arc"—the same being the *Joan* introduction prepared in London five years before. Joan's proposed beatification had stirred a new interest in the martyred girl, and this most beautiful article became a sort of key-note of the public heart. Those who read it were likely to go back and read the *Recollections*, and a new appreciation grew for that masterpiece. In his later and wider acceptance by his own land, and by the world at large, the book came to be regarded with a fresh understanding. Letters came from scores of readers, as if it were a newly issued volume. A distinguished educator wrote:

> I would rather have written your history of Joan of Arc than any other piece of literature in any language.

And this sentiment grew. The demand for the book increased, and has continued to increase, steadily and rapidly.[1] In the long and last analysis the good must prevail. A day will come when there will be as many readers of *Joan* as of any other of Mark Twain's works.

[1] The growing appreciation of *Joan* is shown by the report of sales for the three years following 1904. The sales for that year in America were 1,726; for 1905, 2,445; for 1906, 5,381; for 1907, 6,574. At this point it passed *Pudd'nhead Wilson*, the *Yankee*, *The Gilded Age*, *Life on the Mississippi*, overtook the *Tramp Abroad*, and more than doubled *The American Claimant*. Only *The Innocents Abroad*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Tom Sawyer*, and *Roughing It* still ranged ahead of it, in the order named.

CCXXXIV

LIFE AT 21 FIFTH AVENUE

THE house at 21 Fifth Avenue, built by the architect who had designed Grace Church, had a distinctly ecclesiastical suggestion about its windows, and was of fine and stately proportions within. It was a proper residence for a venerable author and a sage, and with the handsome Hartford furnishings distributed through it, made a distinctly suitable setting for Mark Twain. But it was lonely for him. It lacked soul. He added, presently, a great Æolian Orchestrelle, with a variety of music for his different moods. He believed that he would play it himself when he needed the comfort of harmony, and that Jean, who had not received musical training, or his secretary could also play to him. He had a passion for music, or at least for melody and stately rhythmic measures, though his ear was not attuned to what are termed the more classical compositions. For Wagner, for instance, he cared little, though in a letter to Mrs. Crane he said:

> Certainly nothing in the world is so solemn and impressive and so divinely beautiful as "Tannhäuser." It ought to be used as a religous service.

Beethoven's sonatas and symphonies also moved him deeply. Once, writing to Jean, he asked:

> What is your favorite piece of music, dear? Mine is Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. I have found that out within a day or two.

It was the majestic movement and melodies of the second part that he found most satisfying; but he oftener

inclined to the still tenderer themes of Chopin's nocturnes and one of Schubert's impromptus, while the "Lorelei" and the "Erlking" and the Scottish airs never wearied him. Music thus became a chief consolation during these lonely days—rich organ harmonies that filled the emptiness of his heart and beguiled from dull, material surroundings back into worlds and dreams that he had known and laid away.

He went out very little that winter—usually to the homes of old and intimate friends. Once he attended a small dinner given him by George Smalley at the Metropolitan Club; but it was a private affair, with only good friends present. Still, it formed the beginning of his return to social life, and it was not in his nature to retire from the brightness of human society, or to submerge himself in mourning. As the months wore on he appeared here and there, and took on something of his old-time habit. Then his annual bronchitis appeared, and he was confined a good deal to his home, where he wrote or planned new reforms and enterprises.

The improvement of railway service, through which fewer persons should be maimed and destroyed each year, interested him. He estimated that the railroads and electric lines killed and wounded more than all of the wars combined, and he accumulated statistics and prepared articles on the subject, though he appears to have offered little of such matter for publication. Once, however, when his sympathy was awakened by the victim of a frightful trolley and train collision in Newark, New Jersey, he wrote a letter which promptly found its way into print.

DEAR MISS MADELINE,—Your good & admiring & affectionate brother has told me of your sorrowful share in the trolley disaster which brought unaccustomed tears to millions of eyes & fierce resentment against those whose criminal indifference to their responsibilities caused it, & the reminder has brought back to

me a pang out of that bygone time. I wish I could take you sound & whole out of your bed & break the legs of those officials & put them in it—to stay there. For in my spirit I am merciful, and would not break their necks & backs also, as some would who have no feeling.

It is your brother who permits me to write this line—& so it is not an intrusion, you see.

May you get well—& soon! Sincerely yours,

S. L. CLEMENS.

A very little later he was writing another letter on a similar subject to St. Clair McKelway, who had narrowly escaped injury in a railway accident.

DEAR MCKELWAY,—Your innumerable friends are grateful, most grateful.

As I understand the telegrams, the engineers of your train had never seen a locomotive before. . . . The government's official report, showing that our railways killed twelve hundred persons last year & injured sixty thousand, convinces me that under present conditions one Providence is not enough properly & efficiently to take care of our railroad business. But it is characteristically American—always trying to get along short-handed & save wages.

A massacre of Jews in Moscow renewed his animosity for semi-barbaric Russia. Asked for a Christmas sentiment, he wrote:

It is my warm & world-embracing Christmas hope that all of us that deserve it may finally be gathered together in a heaven of rest & peace, & the others permitted to retire into the clutches of Satan, or the Emperor of Russia, according to preference—if they have a preference.

An article, "The Tsar's Soliloquy," written at this time, was published in the *North American Review* for March (1905). He wrote much more, but most of the other matter he put aside. On a subject like that he always discarded three times as much as he published, and it

was usually about three times as terrific as that which found its way into type. "The Soliloquy," however, is severe enough. It represents the Tsar as contemplating himself without his clothes, and reflecting on what a poor human specimen he presents:

Is it this that 140,000,000 Russians kiss the dust before and worship?—manifestly not! No one could worship this spectacle which is Me. Then who is it, what is it, that they worship? Privately, none knows better than I: it is my clothes! Without my clothes I should be as destitute of authority as any other naked person. No one could tell me from a parson, a barber, a dude. Then who is the real Emperor of Russia! My clothes! There is no other.

The emperor continues this fancy, and reflects on the fierce cruelties that are done in his name. It was a withering satire on Russian imperialism, and it stirred a wide response. This encouraged Clemens to something even more pretentious and effective in the same line. He wrote "King Leopold's Soliloquy," the reflections of the fiendish sovereign who had maimed and slaughtered fifteen millions of African subjects in his greed—gentle, harmless blacks—men, women, and little children whom he had butchered and mutilated in his Congo rubber-fields. Seldom in the history of the world have there been such atrocious practices as those of King Leopold in the Congo, and Clemens spared nothing in his picture of them. The article was regarded as not quite suitable for magazine publication, and it was given to the Congo Reform Association and issued as a booklet for distribution, with no return to the author, who would gladly have written a hundred times as much if he could have saved that unhappy race and have sent Leopold to the electric chair.[1]

[1] The book was price-marked twenty-five cents, but the returns from such as were sold went to the cause. Thousands of them were

Various plans and movements were undertaken for Congo reform, and Clemens worked and wrote letters and gave his voice and his influence and exhausted his rage, at last, as one after another of the half-organized and altogether futile undertakings showed no results. His interest did not die, but it became inactive. Eventually he declared: "I have said all I can say on that terrible subject. I am heart and soul in any movement that will rescue the Congo and hang Leopold, but I cannot write any more."

His fires were likely to burn themselves out, they raged so fiercely. His final paragraph on the subject was a proposed epitaph for Leopold when time should have claimed him. It ran:

Here under this gilded tomb lies rotting the body of one the smell of whose name will still offend the nostrils of men ages upon ages after all the Cæsars and Washingtons & Napoleons shall have ceased to be praised or blamed & been forgotten—Leopold of Belgium.

Clemens had not yet lost interest in the American policy in the Philippines, and in his letters to Twichell he did not hesitate to criticize the President's attitude in this and related matters. Once, in a moment of irritation, he wrote:

DEAR JOE,—I knew I had in me somewhere a definite feeling about the President. If I could only find the words to define it with! Here they are, to a hair—from Leonard Jerome:

"For twenty years I have loved Roosevelt the man, and hated Roosevelt the statesman and politician."

It's mighty good. Every time in twenty-five years that I

distributed free. The Congo, a domain four times as large as the German empire, had been made the ward of Belgium at a convention in Berlin by the agreement of fourteen nations, America and thirteen European states. Leopold promptly seized the country for his personal advantage and the nations apparently found themselves powerless to depose him. No more terrible blunder was ever committed by an assemblage of civilized people.

have met Roosevelt the man a wave of welcome has streaked through me with the hand-grip; but whenever (as a rule) I meet Roosevelt the statesman & politician I find him destitute of morals & not respect-worthy. It is plain that where his political self & party self are concerned he has nothing resembling a conscience; that under those inspirations he is naïvely indifferent to the restraints of duty & even unaware of them; ready to kick the Constitution into the back yard whenever it gets in his way. . . .

But Roosevelt is excusable—I recognize it & (ought to) concede it. We are all insane, each in his own way, & with insanity goes irresponsibility. Theodore the man is sane; in fairness we ought to keep in mind that Theodore, as statesman & politician, is insane & irresponsible.

He wrote a great deal more from time to time on this subject; but that is the gist of his conclusions, and whether justified by time, or otherwise, it expresses to-day the deduction of a very large number of people. It is set down here, because it is a part of Mark Twain's history, and also because a little while after his death there happened to creep into print an incomplete and misleading note (since often reprinted), which he once made in a moment of anger, when he was in a less judicial frame of mind. It seems proper that a man's honest sentiments should be recorded concerning the nation's servants.

Clemens wrote an article at this period which he called the "War Prayer." It pictured the young recruits about to march away for war—the excitement and the celebration—the drum-beat and the heart-beat of patriotism—the final assembly in the church where the minister utters that tremendous invocation:

> God the all-terrible! Thou who ordainest,
> Thunder, Thy clarion, and lightning, Thy sword!

and the "long prayer" for victory to the nation's armies. As the prayer closes a white-robed stranger enters, moves

up the aisle, and takes the preacher's place; then, after some moments of impressive silence, he begins:

"I come from the Throne—bearing a message from Almighty God! . . . He has heard the prayer of His servant, your shepherd, & will grant it if such shall be your desire after I His messenger shall have explained to you its import—that is to say its full import. For it is like unto many of the prayers of men in that it asks for more than he who utters it is aware of—except he pause & think.

"God's servant & yours has prayed his prayer. Has he paused & taken thought? Is it one prayer? No, it is two—one uttered, the other not. Both have reached the ear of Him who heareth all supplications, the spoken & the unspoken. . . .

"You have heard your servant's prayer—the uttered part of it. I am commissioned of God to put into words the other part of it—that part which the pastor—and also you in your hearts —fervently prayed, silently. And ignorantly & unthinkingly? God grant that it was so! You heard these words: 'Grant us the victory, O Lord our God!' That is sufficient. The *whole* of the uttered prayer is completed into those pregnant words.

"Upon the listening spirit of God the Father fell also the unspoken part of the prayer. He commandeth me to put it into words. Listen!

"O Lord our Father, our young patriots, idols of our hearts, go forth to battle—be Thou near them! With them—in spirit—we also go forth from the sweet peace of our beloved firesides to smite the foe.

"O Lord our God, help us to tear their soldiers to bloody shreds with our shells; help us to cover their smiling fields with the pale forms of their patriot dead; help us to drown the thunder of the guns with the wounded, writhing in pain; help us to lay waste their humble homes with a hurricane of fire; help us to wring the hearts of their unoffending widows with unavailing grief; help us to turn them out roofless with their little children to wander unfriended through wastes of their desolated land in rags & hunger & thirst, sport of the sun-flames of summer & the icy winds of winter, broken in spirit, worn with travail, imploring Thee for the refuge of the grave & denied it—for our sakes, who adore Thee, Lord, blast their hopes, blight their

lives, protract their bitter pilgrimage, make heavy their steps, water their way with their tears, stain the white snow with the blood of their wounded feet! We ask of one who is the Spirit of love & who is the ever-faithful refuge & friend of all that are sore beset, & seek His aid with humble & contrite hearts. Grant our prayer, O Lord, & Thine shall be the praise & honor & glory now & ever, Amen."

(After a pause.) "Ye have prayed it; if ye still desire it, speak!—the messenger of the Most High waits."

. . . . . .

It was believed, afterward, that the man was a lunatic, because there was no sense in what he said.

To Dan Beard, who dropped in to see him, Clemens read the "War Prayer," stating that he had read it to his daughter Jean, and others, who had told him he must not print it, for it would be regarded as sacrilege.

"Still you are going to publish it, are you not?"

Clemens, pacing up and down the room in his dressing-gown and slippers, shook his head.

"No," he said, "I have told the whole truth in that, and only dead men can tell the truth in this world. It can be published after I am dead."

He did not care to invite the public verdict that he was a lunatic, or even a fanatic with a mission to destroy the illusions and traditions and conclusions of mankind. To Twichell he wrote, playfully but sincerely:

Am I honest? I give you my word of honor (privately) I am not. For seven years I have suppressed a book which my conscience tells me I ought to publish. I hold it a duty to publish it. There are other difficult duties which I am equal to, but I am not equal to that one. Yes, even *I* am dishonest. Not in many ways, but in some. Forty-one, I think it is. We are certainly *all* honest in one or several ways—every man in the world—though I have a reason to think I am the only one whose blacklist runs so light. Sometimes I feel lonely enough in this lofty solitude.

It was his *Gospel* he referred to as his unpublished book, his doctrine of Selfishness, and of Man the irresponsible Machine. To Twichell he pretended to favor war, which he declared, to his mind, was one of the very best methods known of diminishing the human race.

What a life it is!—this one! Everything we try to do, somebody intrudes & obstructs it. After years of thought & labor I have arrived within one little bit of a step of perfecting my invention for exhausting the oxygen in the globe's air during a stretch of two minutes, & of *course* along comes an obstructor who is inventing something to *protect* human life. Damn such a world anyway.

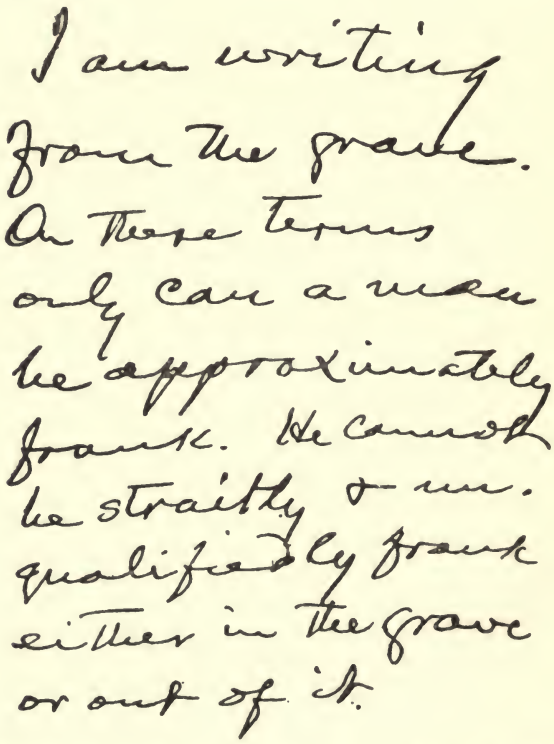
He generally wrote Twichell when he had things to say that were outside of the pale of print. He was sure of an attentive audience of one, and the audience, whether it agreed with him or not, would at least understand him and be honored by his confidence. In one letter of that year he said:

I have written you to-day, not to do you a service, but to do myself one. There was bile in me. I had to empty it or lose my day to-morrow. If I tried to empty it into the *North American Review*—oh, well, I couldn't afford the risk. No, the certainty! The certainty that I wouldn't be satisfied with the result; so I would burn it, & try again to-morrow; burn that and try again the next day. It happens so nearly every time. I have a family to support, & I can't afford this kind of dissipation. Last winter when I was sick I wrote a magazine article three times before I got it to suit me. I put $500 worth of work on it every day for ten days, & at last when I got it to suit me it contained but 3,000 words—$900. I burned it & said I would reform.

And I *have* reformed. I *have* to work my bile off whenever it gets to where I can't stand it, but I can work it off on you economically, because I don't have to make it suit me. It may not suit you, but that isn't any matter; I'm not writing it for that. I have used you as an equilibrium-restorer more than

once in my time, & shall continue, I guess. I would like to use Mr. Rogers, & he is plenty good-natured enough, but it wouldn't be fair to keep him rescuing me from my leather-headed business snarls & make him read interminable bile-irruptions besides; I can't use Howells, he is busy & old & lazy, & won't stand it; I dasn't use Clara, there's things I have to say which she wouldn't put up with—a very dear little ashcat, but has claws.

And so—you're It.



A MARK TWAIN NOTE CONCERNING CERTAIN WRITINGS INTENDED FOR PUBLICATION ONLY AFTER HIS LIFETIME

CCXXXV

A SUMMER IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

HE took for the summer a house at Dublin, New Hampshire, the home of Henry Copley Greene, Lone Tree Hill, on the Monadnock slope. It was in a lovely locality, and for neighbors there were artists, literary people, and those of kindred pursuits, among them a number of old friends. Colonel Higginson had a place near by, and Abbott H. Thayer, the painter, and George de Forest Brush, and the Raphael Pumpelly family, and many more.

Colonel Higginson wrote Clemens a letter of welcome as soon as the news got out that he was going to Dublin; and Clemens, answering, said:

I early learned that you would be my neighbor in the summer & I rejoiced, recognizing in you & your family a large asset. I hope for frequent intercourse between the two households. I shall have my youngest daughter with me. The other one will go from the rest-cure in this city to the rest-cure in Norfolk, Connecticut, & we shall not see her before autumn. We have not seen her since the middle of October.

Jean, the younger daughter, went to Dublin & saw the house & came back charmed with it. I know the Thayers of old—manifestly there is no lack of attractions up there. Mrs. Thayer and I were shipmates in a wild excursion perilously near 40 years ago.

Aldrich was here half an hour ago, like a breeze from over the fields, with the fragrance still upon his spirit. I am tired waiting for that man to get old.

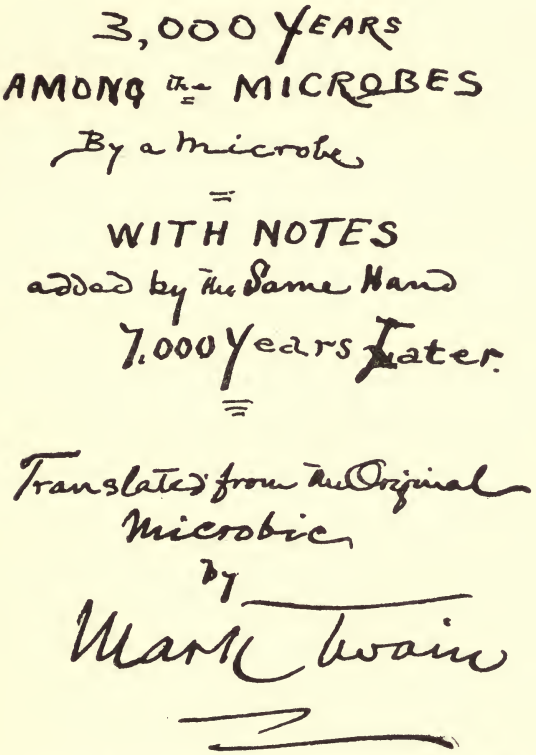
They went to Dublin in May, and became at once a part of the summer colony which congregated there. There was much going to and fro among the different houses, pleasant afternoons in the woods, mountain-climbing for Jean, and everywhere a spirit of fine, unpretentious comradeship.

The Copley Greene house was romantically situated, with a charming outlook. Clemens wrote to Twichell:

> We like it here in the mountains, in the shadows of Monadnock. It is a woody solitude. We have no near neighbors. We *have* neighbors and I can see their houses scattered in the forest distances, for we live on a hill. I am astonished to find that I have known 8 of these 14 neighbors a long time; 10 years is the shortest; then seven beginning with 25 years & running up to 37 years' friendship. It is the most remarkable thing I ever heard of.

This letter was written in July, and he states in it that he has turned out one hundred thousand words of a large manuscript. It was a fantastic tale entitled "3,000 Years among the Microbes," a sort of scientific revel—or revelry—the autobiography of a microbe that had been once a man, and through a failure in a biological experiment transformed into a cholera germ when the experimenter was trying to turn him into a bird. His habitat was the person of a disreputable tramp named Blitzowski, a human continent of vast areas, with seething microbic nations and fantastic life problems. It was a satire, of course—Gulliver's Lilliput outdone—a sort of scientific, socialistic, mathematical jamboree.

He tired of it before it reached completion, though not before it had attained the proportions of a book of size. As a whole it would hardly have added to his reputation, though it is not without fine and humorous passages, and certainly not without interest. Its chief mission was to divert him mentally that summer during those



MARK TWAIN'S SUGGESTED TITLE-PAGE FOR HIS MICROBE BOOK

days and nights when he would otherwise have been alone and brooding upon his loneliness.[1]

His inability to reproduce faces in his mind's eye he mourned as an increasing calamity. Photographs were lifeless things, and when he tried to conjure up the faces of his dead they seemed to drift farther out of reach;

[1] For extracts from "3,000 Years among the Microbes" see Appendix V, at the end of this work.

but now and then kindly sleep brought to him something out of that treasure-house where all our realities are kept for us fresh and fair, perhaps for a day when we may claim them again. Once he wrote to Mrs. Crane:

SUSY DEAR,—I have had a lovely dream. Livy, dressed in black, was sitting up in my bed (here) at my right & looking as young & sweet as she used to when she was in health. She said, "What is the name of your sweet sister?" I said, "Pamela." "Oh yes, that is it, I thought it was—(naming a name which has escaped me) won't you write it down for me?" I reached eagerly for a pen & pad, laid my hands upon both, then said to myself, "It is only a dream," and turned back sorrowfully & there she was still. The conviction flamed through me that our lamented disaster was a dream, & this a reality. I said, "How blessed it is, how blessed it is, it was all a dream, only a dream!" She only smiled and did not ask what dream I meant, which surprised me. She leaned her head against mine & kept saying, "I was perfectly sure it was a dream; I never would have believed it wasn't." I think she said several things, but if so they are gone from my memory. I woke & did not know I had been dreaming. She was gone. I wondered how she could go without my knowing it, but I did not spend any thought upon that. I was too busy thinking of how vivid & real was the dream that we had lost her, & how unspeakably blessed it was to find that it was not true & that she was still ours & with us.

He had the orchestrelle moved to Dublin, although it was no small undertaking, for he needed the solace of its harmonies; and so the days passed along, and he grew stronger in body and courage as his grief drifted farther behind him. Sometimes, in the afternoon or in the evening, when the neighbors had come in for a little while, he would walk up and down and talk in his old, marvelous way of all the things on land and sea, of the past and of the future, "Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate," of the friends he had known and of the things he had done, of the sorrow and absurdities of the world.

It was the same old scintillating, incomparable talk of which Howells once said:

"We shall never know its like again. When he dies it will die with him."

It was during the summer at Dublin that Clemens and Rogers together made up a philanthropic ruse on Twichell. Twichell, through his own prodigal charities, had fallen into debt, a fact which Rogers knew. Rogers was a man who concealed his philanthropies when he could, and he performed many of them of which the world will never know. In this case he said:

"Clemens, I want to help Twichell out of his financial difficulty. I will supply the money and you will do the giving. Twichell must think it comes from you."

Clemens agreed to this on the condition that he be permitted to leave a record of the matter for his children, so that he would not appear in a false light to them, and that Twichell should learn the truth of the gift, sooner or later. So the deed was done, and Twichell and his wife lavished their thanks upon Clemens, who, with his wife, had more than once been their benefactors, making the deception easy enough now. Clemens writhed under these letters of gratitude, and forwarded them to Clara in Norfolk, and later to Rogers himself. He pretended to take great pleasure in this part of the conspiracy, but it was not an unmixed delight. To Rogers he wrote:

I wanted her [Clara] to see what a generous father she's got. I didn't tell her it was you, but by and by I want to tell her, when I have your consent; then I shall want her to remember the letters. I want a record there, for my Life when I am dead, & must be able to furnish the facts about the Relief-of-Lucknow-Twichell in case I fall suddenly, before I get those facts with your consent, before the Twichells themselves.

I read those letters with immense pride! I recognized that I had scored *one* good deed for sure on my halo account. I

haven't had anything that tasted so good since the stolen watermelon.

P. S.—I am hurrying them off to you because I dasn't read them again! I should blush to my heels to fill up with this unearned gratitude again, pouring out of the thankful hearts of those poor swindled people who do not suspect you, but honestly believe I gave that money.

Mr. Rogers hastily replied:

My dear Clemens,—The letters are lovely. Don't breathe. They are so happy! It would be a crime to let them think that you have in any way deceived them. I can keep still. You must. I am sending you all traces of the crime, so that you may look innocent and tell the truth, *as you usually do* when you think you can escape detection. Don't get rattled.

Seriously. You have done a kindness. You are proud of it, I know. You have made your friends happy, and you ought to be so glad as to cheerfully accept reproof from your conscience. Joe Wadsworth and I once stole a goose and gave it to a poor widow as a Christmas present. No crime in that. I always put my counterfeit money on the plate. "The passer of the sasser" always smiles at me and I get credit for doing generous things. But seriously again, if you do feel a little uncomfortable wait until I see you before you tell anybody. Avoid cultivating misery. I am trying to loaf ten solid days. We do hope to see you soon.

The secret was kept, and the matter presently (and characteristically) passed out of Clemens's mind altogether. He never remembered to tell Twichell, and it is revealed here, according to his wish.

The Russian-Japanese war was in progress that summer, and its settlement occurred in August. The terms of it did not please Mark Twain. When a newspaper correspondent asked him for an expression of opinion on the subject he wrote:

Russia was on the highroad to emancipation from an insane and intolerable slavery. I was hoping there would be no peace until Russian liberty was safe. I think that this was a holy

war, in the best and noblest sense of that abused term, and that no war was ever charged with a higher mission.

I think there can be no doubt that that mission is now defeated and Russia's chain riveted; this time to stay. I think the Tsar will now withdraw the small humanities that have been forced from him, and resume his medieval barbarisms with a relieved spirit and an immeasurable joy. I think Russian liberty has had its last chance and has lost it.

I think nothing has been gained by the peace that is remotely comparable to what has been sacrificed by it. One more battle would have abolished the waiting chains of billions upon billions of unborn Russians, and I wish it could have been fought. I hope I am mistaken, yet in all sincerity I believe that this peace is entitled to rank as the most conspicuous disaster in political history.

It was the wisest public utterance on the subject—the deep, resonant note of truth sounding amid a clamor of foolish joy-bells. It was the message of a seer—the prophecy of a sage who sees with the clairvoyance of knowledge and human understanding. Clemens, a few days later, was invited by Colonel Harvey to dine with Baron Rosen and M. Sergius Witte; but an attack of his old malady—rheumatism—prevented his acceptance. His telegram of declination apparently pleased the Russian officials, for Witte asked permission to publish it, and declared that he was going to take it home to show to the Tsar. It was as follows:

To Colonel Harvey,—I am still a cripple, otherwise I should be more than glad of this opportunity to meet the illustrious magicians who came here equipped with nothing but a pen, & with it have divided the honors of the war with the sword. It is fair to presume that in thirty centuries history will not get done in admiring these men who attempted what the world regarded as the impossible & achieved it. Mark Twain.

But this was a modified form. His original draft would perhaps have been less gratifying to that Russian embassy. It read:

To Colonel Harvey,—I am still a cripple, otherwise I should be more than glad of this opportunity to meet those illustrious magicians who with the pen have annulled, obliterated, & abolished every high achievement of the Japanese sword and turned the tragedy of a tremendous war into a gay & blithesome comedy. If I may, let me in all respect and honor salute them as my fellow-humorists, I taking third place, as becomes one who was not born to modesty, but by diligence & hard work is acquiring it. Mark.

There was still another form, brief and expressive:

Dear Colonel,—No, this is a love-feast; when you call a lodge of sorrow send for me. Mark.

Clemens's war sentiment was given the widest newspaper circulation, and brought him many letters, most of them applauding his words. Charles Francis Adams wrote him:

It attracted my attention because it so exactly expresses the views I have myself all along entertained.

And this was the gist of most of the expressed sentiments which came to him.

Clemens wrote a number of things that summer, among them a little essay entitled, "The Privilege of the Grave" —that is to say, free speech. He was looking forward, he said, to the time when he should inherit that privilege, when some of the things he had said, written and laid away, could be published without damage to his friends or family. An article entitled, "Interpreting the Deity," he counted as among the things to be uttered when he had entered into that last great privilege. It is an article on the reading of signs and auguries in all ages to discover the intentions of the Almighty, with historical examples of God's judgments and vindications. Here is a fair specimen. It refers to the chronicle of Henry Huntington:

All through this book Henry exhibits his familiarity with the intentions of God and with the reasons for the intentions. Sometimes—very often, in fact—the act follows the intention after such a wide interval of time that one wonders how Henry could fit one act out of a hundred to one intention, and get the thing right every time, when there was such abundant choice among acts and intentions. Sometimes a man offends the Deity with a crime, and is punished for it thirty years later; meantime he has committed a million other crimes: no matter, Henry can pick out the one that brought the worms. Worms were generally used in those days for the slaying of particularly wicked people. This has gone out now, but in the old times it was a favorite. It always indicated a case of "wrath." For instance:

"The just God avenging Robert Fitzhildebrand's perfidity, a worm grew in his vitals which, gradually gnawing its way through his intestines, fattened on the abandoned man till, tortured with excruciating sufferings and venting himself in bitter moans, he was by a fitting punishment brought to his end" (p. 400).

It was probably an alligator, but we cannot tell; we only know it was a particular breed, and only used to convey wrath. Some authorities think it was an ichthyosaurus, but there is much doubt.

The entire article is in this amusing, satirical strain, and might well enough be printed to-day. It is not altogether clear why it was withheld, even then.

He finished his *Eve's Diary* that summer, and wrote a story which was originally planned to oblige Mrs. Minnie Maddern Fiske, to aid her in a crusade against bull-fighting in Spain. Mrs. Fiske wrote him that she had read his dog story, written against the cruelties of vivisection, and urged him to do something to save the horses that, after faithful service, were sacrificed in the bull-ring. Her letter closed:

I have lain awake nights very often wondering if I dare ask you to write a story of an old horse that is finally given over to the bull-ring. The story you would write would do more good than all the laws we are trying to have made and enforced

for the prevention of cruelty to animals in Spain. We would translate and circulate the story in that country. I have wondered if you would ever write it.

With most devoted homage, Sincerely yours,
MINNIE MADDERN FISKE.

Clemens promptly replied:

DEAR MRS. FISKE,—I shall certainly write the story. But I may not get it to suit me, in which case it will go in the fire. Later I will try it again—& yet again—& again. I am used to this. It has taken me twelve years to write a short story—the shortest one I ever wrote, I think.[1] So do not be discouraged; I will stick to this one in the same way.

Sincerely yours,
S. L. CLEMENS.

It was an inspiring subject, and he began work on it immediately. Within a month from the time he received Mrs. Fiske's letter he had written that pathetic, heart-breaking little story, "A Horse's Tale," and sent it to *Harper's Magazine* for illustration. In a letter written to Mr. Duneka at the time, he tells of his interest in the narrative, and adds:

This strong interest is natural, for the heroine is my small daughter Susy, whom we lost. It was not intentional—it was a good while before I found it out, so I am sending you her picture to use—& to reproduce with photographic exactness the unsurpassable *expression* & all. May you find an artist who has lost an idol.

He explains how he had put in a good deal of work, with his secretary, on the orchestrelle to get the bugle-calls.

We are to do these theatricals this evening with a couple of neighbors for audience, and then pass the hat.

It is not one of Mark Twain's greatest stories, but its pathos brings the tears, and no one can read it without

[1] Probably "The Death Disk."

indignation toward the custom which it was intended to oppose. When it was published, a year later, Mrs. Fiske sent him her grateful acknowledgments, and asked permission to have it printed for pamphlet circulation in Spain.

A number of more or less notable things happened in this, Mark Twain's seventieth year. There was some kind of a reunion going on in California, and he was variously invited to attend. Robert Fulton, of Nevada, was appointed a committee of one to invite him to Reno for a great celebration which was to be held there. Clemens replied that he remembered, as if it were but yesterday, when he had disembarked from the Overland stage in front of the Ormsby Hotel, in Carson City, and told how he would like to accept the invitation.

If I were a few years younger I would accept it, and promptly, and I would go. I would let somebody else do the oration, but as for me I would talk—just talk. I would renew my youth; and talk—and talk—and talk—and have the time of my life! I would march the unforgotten and unforgetable antiques by, and name their names, and give them reverent hail and farewell as they passed—Goodman, McCarthy, Gillis, Curry, Baldwin, Winters, Howard, Nye, Stewart, Neely Johnson, Hal Clayton, North, Root—and my brother, upon whom be peace!—and then the desperadoes, who made life a joy, and the "slaughter-house," a precious possession: Sam Brown, Farmer Pete, Bill Mayfield, Six-fingered Jake, Jack Williams, and the rest of the crimson discipleship, and so on, and so on. Believe me, I would start a resurrection it would do you more good to look at than the next one will, if you go on the way you are going now.

Those were the days!—those old ones. They will come no more; youth will come no more. They were so full to the brim with the wine of life; there have been no others like them. It chokes me up to think of them. Would you like me to come out there and cry? It would not beseem my white head.

Good-by. I drink to you all. Have a good time—and take an old man's blessing.

In reply to another invitation from H. H. Bancroft, of San Francisco, he wrote that his wandering days were over, and that it was his purpose to sit by the fire for the rest of his "remnant of life."

A man who, like me, is going to strike 70 on the 30th of next November has no business to be flitting around the way Howells does—that shameless old fictitious butterfly. (But if he comes don't tell him I said it, for it would hurt him & I wouldn't brush a flake of powder from his wing for anything. I only say it in envy of his indestructible youth anyway. Howells will be 88 in October.)

And it was either then or on a similar occasion that he replied after this fashion:

I have done more for San Francisco than any other of its old residents. Since I left there it has increased in population fully 300,000. I could have done more—I could have gone earlier—— it was suggested.

Which, by the way, is a perfect example of Mark Twain's humorous manner, the delicately timed pause, and the afterthought. Most humorists would have been contented to end with the statement, "I could have gone earlier." Only Mark Twain could have added that final exquisite touch—"it was suggested."

CCXXXVI

AT PIER 70

MARK TWAIN was nearing seventy, the scriptural limitation of life, and the returns were coming in. Some one of the old group was dying all the time. The roll-call returned only a scattering answer. Of his oldest friends, Charles Henry Webb, John Hay, and Sir Henry Irving, all died that year. When Hay died Clemens gave this message to the press:

I am deeply grieved, & I mourn with the nation this loss which is irreparable. My friendship with Mr. Hay & my admiration of him endured 38 years without impairment.

It was only a little earlier that he had written Hay an anonymous letter, a copy of which he preserved. It here follows:

DEAR & HONORED SIR,—I never hear any one speak of you & of your long roll of illustrious services in other than terms of pride & praise—& out of the heart. I think I am right in believing you to be the only man in the civil service of the country the cleanness of whose motives is never questioned by any citizen, & whose acts proceed always upon a broad & high plane, never by accident or pressure of circumstance upon a narrow or low one. There are majorities that are proud of more than one of the nation's great servants, but I believe, & I think I know, that you are the only one of whom the entire nation is proud. Proud & thankful.

Name & address are lacking here, & for a purpose: to leave you no chance to make my words a burden to you and a reproach

to me, who would lighten your burdens if I could, not add to them.

Irving died in October, and Clemens ordered a wreath for his funeral. To MacAlister he wrote:

I profoundly grieve over Irving's death. It is another reminder. My section of the procession has but a little way to go. I could not be very sorry if I tried.

Mark Twain, nearing seventy, felt that there was not much left for him to celebrate; and when Colonel Harvey proposed a birthday gathering in his honor, Clemens suggested a bohemian assembly over beer and sandwiches in some snug place, with Howells, Henry Rogers, Twichell, Dr. Rice, Dr. Edward Quintard, Augustus Thomas, and such other kindred souls as were still left to answer the call. But Harvey had something different in view: something more splendid even than the sixty-seventh birthday feast, more pretentious, indeed, than any former literary gathering. He felt that the attainment of seventy years by America's most distinguished man of letters and private citizen was a circumstance which could not be moderately or even modestly observed. The date was set five days later than the actual birthday—that is to say, on December 5th, in order that it might not conflict with the various Thanksgiving holidays and occasions. Delmonico's great room was chosen for the celebration of it, and invitations were sent out to practically every writer of any distinction in America, and to many abroad. Of these nearly two hundred accepted, while such as could not come sent pathetic regrets.

What an occasion it was! The flower of American literature gathered to do honor to its chief. The whole atmosphere of the place seemed permeated with his presence, and when Colonel Harvey presented William Dean Howells, and when Howells had read another double-

barreled sonnet, and introduced the guest of the evening with the words, "I will not say, 'O King, live forever,' but, 'O King, live as long as you like!'" and Mark Twain rose, his snow-white hair gleaming above that brilliant assembly, it seemed that a world was speaking out in a voice of applause and welcome. With a great tumult the throng rose, a billow of life, the white handkerchiefs flying foam-like on its crest. Those who had gathered there realized that it was a mighty moment, not only in his life but in theirs. They were there to see this supreme embodiment of the American spirit as he scaled the mountain-top. He, too, realized the drama of that moment—the marvel of it—and he must have flashed a swift panoramic view backward over the long way he had come, to stand, as he had himself once expressed it, "for a single, splendid moment on the Alps of fame outlined against the sun." He must have remembered; for when he came to speak he went back to the very beginning, to his very first banquet, as he called it, when, as he said, "I hadn't any hair; I hadn't any teeth; I hadn't any clothes." He sketched the meagerness of that little hamlet which had seen his birth, sketched it playfully, delightfully, so that his hearers laughed and shouted; but there was always a tenderness under it all, and often the tears were not far beneath the surface. He told of his habits of life, how he had attained seventy years by simply sticking to a scheme of living which would kill anybody else; how he smoked constantly, loathed exercise, and had no other regularity of habits. Then, at last, he reached that wonderful, unforgetable close:

Threescore years and ten!

It is the scriptural statute of limitations. After that you owe no active duties; for you the strenuous life is over. You are a time-expired man, to use Kipling's military phrase: You have served your term, well or less well, and you are mustered out. You are become an honorary member of the republic, you are

emancipated, compulsions are not for you, nor any bugle-call but "lights out." You pay the time-worn duty bills if you choose, or decline if you prefer—and without prejudice—for they are not legally collectable.

The previous-engagement plea, which in forty years has cost you so many twinges, you can lay aside forever; on this side of the grave you will never need it again. If you shrink at thought of night, and winter, and the late homecomings from the banquet and the lights and laughter through the deserted streets—a desolation which would not remind you now, as for a generation it did, that your friends are sleeping and you must creep in a-tiptoe and not disturb them, but would only remind you that you need not tiptoe, you can never disturb them more—if you shrink at the thought of these things you need only reply, "Your invitation honors me and pleases me because you still keep me in your remembrance, but I am seventy; seventy, and would nestle in the chimney-corner, and smoke my pipe, and read my book, and take my rest, wishing you well in all affection, and that when you in your turn shall arrive at Pier 70 you may step aboard your waiting ship with a reconciled spirit, and lay your course toward the sinking sun with a contented heart."

The tears that had been lying in wait were not restrained now. If there were any present who did not let them flow without shame, who did not shout their applause from throats choked with sobs, the writer of these lines failed to see them or to hear of them. There was not one who was ashamed to pay the great tribute of tears.

Many of his old friends, one after another, rose to tell their love for him—Brander Matthews, Cable, Kate Douglas Riggs, Gilder, Carnegie, Bangs, Bacheller—they kept it up far into the next morning. No other arrival at Pier 70 ever awoke a grander welcome.

CCXXXVII

AFTERMATH

THE announcement of the seventieth birthday dinner had precipitated a perfect avalanche of letters, which continued to flow in until the news accounts of it precipitated another avalanche. The carriers' bags were stuffed with greetings that came from every part of the world, from every class of humanity. They were all full of love and tender wishes. A card signed only with initials said: "God bless your old sweet soul for having lived."

Aldrich, who could not attend the dinner, declared that all through the evening he had been listening in his mind to a murmur of voices in the hall at Delmonico's. A group of English authors in London combined in a cable of congratulations. Anstey, Alfred Austin, Balfour, Barrie, Bryce, Chesterton, Dobson, Doyle, Gosse, Hardy, Hope, Jacobs, Kipling, Lang, Parker, Tenniel, Watson, and Zangwill were among the signatures.

Helen Keller wrote:

> And you are seventy years old? Or is the report exaggerated, like that of your death? I remember, when I saw you last, at the house of dear Mr. Hutton, in Princeton, you said:
>
> "If a man is a pessimist before he is forty-eight he knows too much. If he is an optimist after he is forty-eight he knows too little."
>
> Now we *know* you are an optimist, and nobody would dare to accuse one on the "seven-terraced summit" of knowing little. So probably you are not seventy after all, but only forty-seven!

Helen Keller was right. Mark Twain was not a pessimist in his heart, but only by premeditation. It was his observation and his logic that led him to write those things that, even in their bitterness, somehow conveyed that spirit of human sympathy which is so closely linked to hope. To Miss Keller he wrote:

"Oh, thank you for your lovely words!"

He was given another birthday celebration that month —this time by the Society of Illustrators. Dan Beard, president, was also toast-master; and as he presented Mark Twain there was a trumpet-note, and a lovely girl, costumed as Joan of Arc, entered and, approaching him, presented him with a laurel wreath. It was planned and carried out as a surprise to him, and he hardly knew for the moment whether it was a vision or a reality. He was deeply affected, so much so that for several moments he could not find his voice to make any acknowledgments.

Clemens was more than ever sought now, and he responded when the cause was a worthy one. He spoke for the benefit of the Russian sufferers at the Casino on December 18th. Madame Sarah Bernhardt was also there, and spoke in French. He followed her, declaring that it seemed a sort of cruelty to inflict upon an audience our rude English after hearing that divine speech flowing in that lucid Gallic tongue.

It has always been a marvel to me—that French language; it has always been a puzzle to me. How beautiful that language is! How expressive it seems to be! How full of grace it is!

And when it comes from lips like those, how eloquent and how limpid it is! And, oh, I am always deceived—I always think I am going to understand it.

It is such a delight to me, *such* a delight to me, to meet Madame Bernhardt, and laugh hand to hand and heart to heart with her.

I have seen her play, as we all have, and, oh, that is divine;

but I have always wanted to know Madame Bernhardt herself —her fiery self. I have wanted to know that beautiful character.

Why, she is the youngest person I ever saw, except myself— for I always feel young when I come in the presence of young people.

And truly, at seventy, Mark Twain was young, his manner, his movement, his point of view—these were all, and always, young.

A number of palmists about that time examined impressions of his hand without knowledge as to the owner, and they all agreed that it was the hand of a man with the characteristics of youth, with inspiration, and enthusiasm, and sympathy—a lover of justice and of the sublime. They all agreed, too, that he was a deep philosopher, though, alas! they likewise agreed that he lacked the sense of humor, which is not as surprising as it sounds, for with Mark Twain humor was never mere fun-making nor the love of it; rather it was the flower of his philosophy—its bloom and fragrance.

When the fanfare and drum-beat of his birthday honors had passed by, and a moment of calm had followed, Mark Twain set down some reflections on the new estate he had achieved. The little paper, which forms a perfect pendant to the "Seventieth Birthday Speech," here follows:

OLD AGE

I think it likely that people who have not been here will be interested to know what it is like. I arrived on the thirtieth of November, fresh from carefree & frivolous 69, & was disappointed.

There is nothing novel about it, nothing striking, nothing to thrill you & make your eye glitter & your tongue cry out, "Oh, it *is* wonderful, perfectly wonderful!" Yes, it is disappointing. You say, "Is *this* it?—this? after all this talk and fuss of a thousand generations of travelers who have crossed this frontier

& looked about them & told what they saw & felt? Why, it looks just like 69."

And that is true. Also it is natural, for you have not come by the fast express; you have been lagging & dragging across the world's continents behind oxen; when that is your pace one country melts into the next one so gradually that you are not able to notice the change; 70 looks like 69; 69 looked like 68; 68 looked like '67—& so on back & back to the beginning. If you climb to a summit & look back—ah, then you see!

Down that far-reaching perspective you can make out each country & climate that you crossed, all the way up from the hot equator to the ice-summit where you are perched. You can make out where Infancy verged into Boyhood; Boyhood into down-lipped Youth; Youth into bearded, indefinite Young-Manhood; indefinite Young-Manhood into definite Manhood; definite Manhood, with large, aggressive ambitions, into sobered & heedful Husbandhood & Fatherhood; these into troubled & foreboding Age, with graying hair; this into Old Age, white-headed, the temple empty, the idols broken, the worshipers in their graves, nothing left but You, a remnant, a tradition, belated fag-end of a foolish dream, a dream that was so ingeniously dreamed that it seemed real all the time; nothing left but You, center of a snowy desolation, perched on the ice-summit, gazing out over the stages of that long *trek* & asking Yourself, "Would you do it again if you had the chance?"

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